Islam and Citizenship in Indonesia

Democracy and the quest for an inclusive public ethics

Robert W. Hefner

POLITICS IN ASIA

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"This book will be a standard reference for any future work on Islam and democracy in Indonesia or comparatively across the Muslim world. It is a culmination of more than two decades of work and experience addressing Islam, democratic politics, and society in Indonesia."

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"Robert W. Hefner is the leading scholar of Islam and democracy in Indonesia – the demographically largest and intellectually most vibrant Muslim-majority country. This book will be considered as Hefner's magnum opus – a culmination of his half-a-century-long examination of diverse religious views and practices as well as their political implications in Indonesia's rural and urban settings. Islam and Citizenship analyzes the complex relations between Muslim politics, democracy, and public ethics with a nuanced attention to the Indonesian context while also providing insights for the rest of the Muslim world. It masterfully covers contested issues such as sharia, gender relations, and education. This groundbreaking book will shape the field of religion and politics for many years to come."

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"Hefner's book puts Muslims at the center of the study of Islam in Indonesia, which he describes as having a 'complex and agonistic plurality'. This is a welcome intervention in contemporary commentary on Islam and politics, taking readers on a multisited and multidimensional journey. Deploying an erudite lens that combines his ethnographic vision with comparative politics and sociology, he finds a concern with shared ideas of public ethics at the heart of contemporary contestations in the Muslim public sphere. Care of the social emerges as a key element accounting for the tenaciousness of Indonesian democracy, in the face of the conservative turn."

– **Kathryn Robinson**, *The Australian National University*

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ISLAM AND CITIZENSHIP IN INDONESIA

Islam and Citizenship in Indonesia examines the conditions facilitating democracy, women's rights, and inclusive citizenship in Indonesia, the most populous Muslim-majority country and the third largest democracy in the world. The book shows that Muslim understandings of Islamic traditions and ethics have coevolved with the understanding and practice of democracy and citizen belonging.

Following thirty-two years of authoritarian rule, in 1998 this sprawling Southeast Asian country returned to electoral democracy. The achievement brought with it, however, an upsurge in both the numbers and assertiveness of Islamist militias, as well as a sharp increase in violence against religious minorities. The resulting mobilizations have pitted the Muslim supporters of an Indonesian variety of inclusive citizenship against populist proponents of Islamist majoritarianism. Seen from this historical example, the book demonstrates that Muslim actors come to know and practice Islam in a manner not determined in an unchanging way by scriptural commands but in coevolution with broader currents in politics, society, and citizen belonging. By exploring these questions in both an Indonesian and comparative context, this book offers important lessons on the challenge of democracy and inclusive citizenship in the Muslim-majority world.

Well-written and informative, this book will be suitable for adoption in university courses on Islam, Southeast Asian Politics, Indonesian and Asian studies, as well as courses dealing with religion, democracy, and citizen belonging in multicultural societies around the world. The book will be of interest to the general reader with an interest in Islam, citizenship, and democracy.

Robert W. Hefner is a professor in the Department of Anthropology and the Pardee School of Global Affairs at Boston University, USA. He is the president of the American Institute for Indonesian Studies and a former president of the Association for Asian Studies. He specializes in the study of Muslim politics, modern public ethics, and democracy across cultures. His previous publications include the *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia* (ed. 2018).

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Democracy and the Quest for an Inclusive Public Ethics

Robert W. Hefner

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Cover image: ©Robert W. Hefner
First published 2024
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-032-62914-8 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-62913-1 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-62915-5 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The present book has a broad topical focus because it is the product of research explorations conducted over an extended period from 1999 to 2020. This long-term research was itself a sequel to earlier research engagements. In the course of my doctoral research (1978–80) and postdoctoral residencies during the mid-1980s, I had carried out ethnographic studies in what were at the time remote upland villages in the regencies of Malang and Pasuruan in the province of East Java. As was to be the pattern throughout my career, that early research had a twin focus, political-economic and ethico-religious (Hefner 1985, 1990). What linked the two research foci was a conviction, which is also central to this book: that efforts to forge social identities and ways of life are at the very heart of all human societies, and their sustenance over time requires the production and reproduction of both material resources and ways of knowing and identifying oneself and one's fellows in society.

Animated by these research interests, during this early phase of my research I spent two and one-half years examining class structures and socioeconomic change in East Java's rugged uplands, a region that had been buffeted a decade earlier by the mass killings of alleged communists in the nearby lowlands (Hefner 1990; cf. Fealy and McGregor 2010; Robinson 2018). I also explored the rapid growth of piety among Muslim East Javanese and the process's implications for local practices of citizen recognition and coexistence among Muslims and the minority Hindus, Christians, and Javanese mystics also residing in these territories (see Chapter 2; Hefner 1985, 1987a, 1987b, 1990; cf. Beatty 1999). This research marked the beginning of my life-long interest in the challenge of ethico-religious plurality and citizen belonging in Indonesia.

A few years later, I traded my East Java landscapes for the bustling boulevards of Jakarta, the nation's capital. From 1990 to 1999, I made visits to the city each

summer and during winter breaks to observe social activism among Indonesia's new Muslim middle class on matters relating to Islam, democracy, women's rights, and citizenship (Hefner 2000). As Indonesia exited from the authoritarian New Order (1966–May 1998), I decided in 1999 that it was time to leave the capital and return to a less metropolitan locale. The setting to which I turned from that period to today was not East Java's volcanic uplands but the cosmopolitan city of Yogyakarta in Java's south-central heartland. Over the next several years, I used Yogyakarta as my research base while also cycling through projects in other parts of the archipelago. These took me to the special province of Aceh in 2005, 2006, and 2007 to examine the impact of the implementation of Islamic legal traditions on women and non-Muslims; to Lombok and South Sulawesi in 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2015 to explore local debates over Islam and citizenship; to East Kalimantan in 2005 to meet with Islamist educators at the Hidayatullah boarding school; to Manado in North Sulawesi in 2014 and 2015 to explore interreligious relations in a Christian-majority province; to Banten and West Java during the summers of 2006, 2008, 2012, 2015, and 2016 to meet with educators and shariah activists; and to Sumba in eastern Indonesia in 2019 to join the anthropologist Syamsul Maarif in examining the indigenous Marapu community in the aftermath of a Constitutional Court ruling on state policies toward indigenous religions (see Chapter 3, and Hefner 2018; Lindsey 2019; Maarif 2017; Maarif et al. 2019).

As this history suggests, there was a measure of topical serendipity to my research itinerary. Among other things, the questions I pursued were informed by debates raging in academic and policy circles as Indonesia returned to electoral democracy after 1998–1999, a period known to Indonesians as *Reformasi* or "Reformation." The early years of the transition were marked by the passage of four democracy-enhancing constitutional amendments and a far-reaching decentralization of state power (see Chapter 1; Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Bünte 2009; Lindsey and Pausacker 2016). However, the period also witnessed an upsurge in communal violence in eight of the country's thirty-four provinces, as well as growing tensions between Muslim democrats and the proponents of less inclusive varieties of Islamic ethics and law (Chapters 2 and 3; and Aspinall 2011; Bertrand 2004, 2010; Sidel 2006; Wilson 2008, 2015). Such boilerplate issues form the analytic backdrop to this book's concern with Islam, democracy, and citizens belonging in contemporary Indonesia.

The projects to which I dedicated myself over the next two decades also differed from my earlier research stints in several subtler ways. The first difference had to do with an under-discussed but momentous development in Indonesian studies: the movement of a new generation of Indonesian-born researchers into all of the academic disciplines involved in the study of Indonesia. Two decades ago the celebrated Indonesian anthropologist, Ariel Heryanto (b. 1954; see Heryanto 2002), rightly lamented the dearth of locally born scholars in Indonesian and Southeast Asian studies. He also surmised, however, that these academic fields seemed on the verge of a significant personnel change. Heryanto was right, and over the next

two decades that change unfolded with breathtaking speed. The academic fields experiencing this welcome shift included those of most direct relevance for the present book: anthropology, comparative politics, gender studies, and Islamic ethics and law. In area-studies disciplines in other parts of the global south, a similar shift from foreign researcher dominance to native scholar prominence has been aptly celebrated as the decolonization or "de-Orientalization" of the area-oriented humanities and social sciences (Basarudin 2016; Ernst and Martin 2010). The same characterization is heard here in Indonesia as well, especially among the growing number of Muslim scholars influenced by "heritage thinkers" (Ar., *turathiyyun*) in the Middle East (Kersten 2015:65).

It was in response to these developments, then, that in the 2000s I undertook a repurposing of myself as an anthropologist, an Indonesianist, and a student of Islam and society. The term "repurposing" may sound hyperbolic, but to me it captures well the urgency and depth of my reorientation. As with life in general, academic research is shaped not just by our choice of research projects or theoretical paradigms, but by the personal commitments and "encumbrances" (Sandel 1984) we bring to our sense of who we are and, in the anthropological-psychiatrist Arthur Kleinman's (2007) apt phrase, "what really matters." At the center of my shift in research priorities was the effort to learn more fully from Indonesian scholars and to ensure that their voices, concerns, and insights figured centrally in the way I understand Islam, Indonesia, and the questions at the heart of this book: how modern Indonesians imagine and practice citizen belonging, which is to say, ways of living together in ethnic, religious, and gendered difference.

None of the research on which this book is based would have been possible were it not for the friendships and collaborations I enjoyed with Indonesian colleagues at the forefront of this new wave of research. The first of the collaborations on which this book is based took place against the backdrop of Indonesia's rough-and-tumble return to electoral democracy in 1998–2001. In those years, and with the support of the Jakarta office of the Ford Foundation, I worked with three Gadjah Mada University scholars, Mohtar Mas'oed, Muhammad Najib Azca, and the late S. Rizal Panggabean carrying out ethnographic and interview research on social resources for civility, citizenship, and participation in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. An early antecedent to the present book, this project was part of a larger three-country study I directed on ethnoreligious diversity and citizenship titled, "Southeast Asian Pluralisms: Social Resources for Civility and Participation in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia" (Hefner 2001). I thank my three research partners for their kindness and fine work. I also wish to thank the then director of the Ford Jakarta office, Mary Zurbuchen, for her generous support and visionary leadership.

An independent member of the same Ford Foundation–funded project and a colleague from whom I have learned to this day, Vedi R. Hadiz (now director of the Asia Institute at the University of Melbourne) participated in the same project, conducting research on the intersection of religious and class identities in the Indonesian labor movement. As the present book will make clear, Vedi has

been a critical reference for my own scholarship in the years since. A sociologist who taught a course on Islam and gender at Yogyakarta's Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University and in 2018 became a special staff advisor on religious affairs to President Joko Widodo, Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin contributed a critical analysis of gender ideologies and contestation in the Javanese Muslim community (Dzuhayatin 2001). Although a Malaysian rather than Indonesian national, Zainah Anwar, the cofounder of Sisters in Islam in Malaysia (see Basarudin 2016), also contributed a study of the origins and development of that world-famous Muslim feminist organization (Anwar 2001). Zainah and Ruhaini's insights and friendship have informed my approach to Islam and gender ever since.

From 1999 to 2003, I conducted research in collaboration with the staff of the Institute for Islamic and Social Studies (*Lembaga Kajian Islam dan Sosial*, LKIS) in the special district of Yogyakarta in south-central Java. Established in 1993 by progressive Muslim graduates of the nearby Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, LKIS is a Nahdlatul-Ulama-oriented nongovernmental organization active in publishing and educational outreach on matters related to democracy, gender equality, and inclusive citizenship, as well as new approaches to the study of Islamic law. Over the course of our collaborations, LKIS colleagues took me to more than a dozen Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) for two-day educational workshops designed to heighten Muslim educators' support for democratic politics and citizen education. Five LKIS researchers – Akhmad Fikri AF, Amiruddin Arrani, Imam Baehaqi, M. Jadul Maula, and Yuni Ma'rufah – worked with me to conduct ethnographic research and record some 150 transcribed interviews on citizenship and social plurality in the greater south-central Java region (2000–1).

Although our Ford Foundation–funded collaboration ended in 2003, during summers from 2003 to 2012 I continued collaborations with the network of researchers with whom I had first worked at LKIS, including Achmad Fikri, Jadul Maula, and Laode Arham. We carried out an additional 200 tape-recorded interviews and conducted short-term ethnographic studies, focusing on faith-based nongovernmental organizations (Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist), political parties (Muslim-based and multireligious), civic educational programs, and debates over the proper role for Islamic shariah in a multireligious nation. We also conducted interviews and carried out film documentary shooting with Imam Aziz, founding director of the Syarikat organization (*Masyarakat Santri untuk Advokasi Rakyat*, Muslim Community for People's Advocacy). In 1993, Mas Imam had been one of the cofounders of LKIS. In the late 1990s he left that organization to work with colleagues in Nahdlatul Ulama to promote reconciliation between survivors of the 1965–1966 killings and NU militias who had participated in the violence (see Chapters 1 and 2; McGregor 2009). Mas Imam's personal history speaks to both the boldness of citizen initiatives in *Reformasi* Indonesia and their greatest challenges (see Chapter 4).

From 2004 to 2006, I worked with scholars from the Institute for the Study of Islam and Society (*Pusat Penelitian Islam dan Masyarakat*; PPIM) at the Syarif

Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Ciputat, Banten (in the greater Jakarta area) in a project on Islamic schools and civic education across nine regions in Indonesia (see Burhanudin and Afrianty 2006). This project and a subsequent study of Islamic schooling and democracy around the world were funded by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts to Boston University's Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs. I wish to express my special thanks to Luis Lugo at the Pew Research Center, as well as to the Indonesian project directors of the first project, the late Azyumardi Azra and Jamhari Makruf, and the rest of the research team: Dina Afrianty, Jajat Burhanudin, Din Wahid, Jajang Jahroni, Oman Fathuarahman, Arief Subhan, Ismatu Ropi, and Fuad Jabali. Two years later I collaborated with Azyumardi Azra and Dina Afrianty again, this time in a comparative study of the culture and politics of modern Muslim education in countries around the world. This project was also funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts and codirected with Muhammad Qasim Zaman of Princeton University in 2004–5 (Hefner and Zaman 2007). An advisor to the Indonesian wing of the project, Jajang Jahroni came to Boston University a few years later to take a Ph.D. in anthropology, carrying out an ethnographic study of Salafism in Indonesia. I also learned from and served as an outside reader for dissertation theses later written by three other members of the team, Dina Afrianty, Din Wahid, and Ismatu Ropi. Jajang and Din also worked with me on the Indonesian field research portion of a comparative project in 2009–10 on "Sharia Politics in Muslim-Majority Countries" (Hefner 2011b). My debt to Muhammad Qasim Zaman and these Indonesian scholars is great, and I thank them heartily.

From 2012 to 2015, I again cooperated with Dina, Din, and Jajang in a research project exploring the Islamic law and modern Muslim ethics in Indonesia. This was at a time when Islamist efforts to promote the implementation of a state-mandated "Islamic law" at a national level had slowed, but the issue was still much in the political air (Chapters 2 and 7). In the face of electoral impasses, Islamist movements in the provinces worked to strike deals with regional politicians, mobilizing electoral support in exchange for the formulation of regional by-laws of a vague shariah inspiration, laws typically if inaccurately referred to as "shariah by-laws" (*perda shariah*; see Chapters 4 and 7 and Buehler 2016). The Indonesian portion of this project was part of a larger, two-year study I directed on Islamic law and modern Muslim ethics in ten societies around the world (Hefner 2016a). The project was funded by the Religion and World Affairs program at the Henry Luce Foundation. I want to give special thanks to the program director, Toby Volkman, for her support and guidance on these and other projects. Although none of my other project partners are Indonesianists as such, the project members were part of a multiyear conversation on Islamic law, ethics, and gender from which I benefited greatly. For these and later exchanges I thank Anver M. Emon, Ahmet T. Kuru, Clark Lombardi, Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Michael G. Peletz, Zakia Salime, Dorothea E. Schulz, Muhammad Qasim Zaman, and Malika Zeghal.

With the support of the Henry Luce Foundation and the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the Notre Dame University, three research projects from 2014 to 2020 allowed me to collaborate with a new series of partners in projects focusing on Indonesia. I thank Toby Volkman of Luce again, and Scott Appleby, Dean of the Keogh School of International Studies, and Ebrahim Moosa at the Kroc Institute for Peace Studies at Notre Dame University for their generous support and guidance. All three initiatives were part of a project on "Indonesian Pluralities: Social Resources for Civility and Co-existence" and were codirected with Zainal Abidin Bagir, the director of the Institute for Cultural and Religious Studies (ICRS) at Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Pak Zain and I had previously collaborated in several research projects on citizenship and civic pluralism, and my debt to him and his colleagues at the ICRS is great. The first of these later projects examined plurality and pluralist coexistence in *Reformasi*-era Indonesia, building on our ethnographic field research in Manado, the Banda Islands, Ambon, West Java, and Yogyakarta, as well with Islamist groups like the Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) (Hefner and Bagir 2021). I wish to thank the core researchers in the project: Mohammad Iqbal Ahnaf, Erica Larsen, Alimatul Qibtiyah, Kelli Swazey, and Marthen Tahun. The second and third phases of this research project combined field research with the shooting of seven film documentaries on aspects of plurality and citizenship in contemporary Indonesia. In addition to the first-wave team I want to express my special thanks to Syamsul Maarif, Evi Lina Sutrisno, Dicky Sofyan, Leonard C. Epafras, Al Makin, and Moch Nur Ichwan. My special thanks too must go to our gifted Watchdoc documentary partners (winners of the 2021 Ramon Magsaysay award for independent journalism): Andhy Panca Kurniawan, Ari Trismana, Dandhy Dwi Laksono, and Edy Purwanto.

For their generous support for my research in Yogyakarta over many years, I wish to express my thanks to Inayah Rakhmani, Siti Syamsiyatun, Bernard Adeney-Risakotta, Zuly Qodir, Noorhaidi Hasan, Suhadi, and my fellow travelers in Indonesian studies for most of my adult life, Mark Woodward and Ronald Lukens-Bull. On matters of religious and civic education, I learned from and also wish to thank A. Ubaedillah, director of the Civic Education Program at the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, and the pioneering civic educator, the late Said Tuhuleyley of the Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta. Ahmad Najib Burhani of Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) also provided me with valuable insights into debates within the Muhammadiyah national leadership with regard to religious pluralism. Zainal Abidin Bagir and I also participated in the Indonesian wing of a multiyear project (2014–2020) directed by Timothy Shah and Nathan Berkeley of the Religious Freedom Institute. I thank Tim and Nathan for their generous support and insights over the years into matters of religious freedom in South and Southeast Asia. In the later phases of these projects, I also got to know two leading figures in the struggle for an inclusive citizen ethics in Indonesia: Yahya Cholil Staquf, who on December 24, 2021, was elected

chair of the National Executive of the Nahdlatul Ulama (est. 1926, and today the largest Muslim association in the world), and C. Holland Taylor, the American-born but Indonesia-based cofounder and chairman of the LibforAll Foundation and cofounder and deputy chairman of the Bayt ar-Rahmah. I thank both of these men for their insights and generous counsel on all things Indonesian.

Although none was directly involved in this latter project, several other scholars during the later phases of this research (2014–2020) helped me think through matters of ethics, gender, and Islamic law: Kecia Ali of Boston University; John R. Bowen of the University of Washington St. Louis; Timothy P. Daniels of Hofstra University; Nelly van Doorn-Harder of Wake Forest College; John Esposito of Georgetown University; Greg Fealy of the Australian National University; Andrée Feillard and Rémy Madinier of the CRCS-Paris; Ariel Heryanto of the Australian National University; James B. Hoesterey of Emory University; Carla Jones of the University of Colorada; Martin van Bruinessen of Utrecht University; M.A. Muqtedar Khan of the University of Delaware; Tim Lindsey of the Law School at the University of Melbourne; Kathryn Robinson of the Australian National University; Michael G. Peletz of Emory University; Anne Rasmussen of the College of William and Mary; and my colleague at the Pardee School of Global Affairs at Boston University, Jeremy C. Menchik.

Over some fifteen years, I also engaged in regular conversations on Indonesia and Muslim politics with the late Alfred Stepan of Columbia University, one of the twentieth century's greatest theorists of democratic transitions. I am forever grateful to Al for all that he did to help me sharpen my ideas on religion and democratization. In the years since Al's passing, Ahmet T. Kuru of San Diego has stepped in to provide me with guidance on many of the same questions, also from the perspective of comparative politics. Mark Thompson of the University of Hong Kong has guided me with a similar depth of insight with regard to populism and the travails of democracy in contemporary Southeast Asia. I am forever grateful to all these scholars.

Last but not least, my biggest intellectual and personal debt is to my wife, fellow Indonesianist, and life partner ever since we were twenty-year-old students in a junior year abroad program in Aix-en-Provence, France, Nancy J. Smith-Hefner. From our first walk in the Tuileries Garden in Paris to our mountain treks through the sand sea around Mt. Bromo in East Java and on to raising our children in Boston, Massachusetts, we have traveled the earth and looked heavenward together. We were blessed along the way with the company of our daughter Claire-Marie and son William Francisco Javier. Nancy, Claire, and Will taught me in the deepest way about the ethical issue at the heart of this book – humanity's perennial preoccupation with determining just "*what* really matters," ethically and affectively speaking. With all my love and gratitude I dedicate this book to them.

1

INTRODUCTION

Islam and Citizenship in Democratic Indonesia

Continental in its areal breadth and cultural diversity, Indonesia defies simple generalizations. At first some facts seem straightforward enough. Indonesia is a Southeast Asian nation made up of 17,000 islands stretching 3,400 miles east to west along the equator and separating mainland Southeast Asia from Australasia. This sprawling archipelago is home to more than seven hundred ethnic groups, 145 of which are recognized in the national census. The two largest ethnic groups (Javanese, 42%, and Sundanese, 15.5%) make up more than half of the national population. The size of its population makes Indonesia the fourth most populous country in the world and the largest Muslim-majority nation. A full 87.2% of this nation's 280 million residents profess Islam, but there are socially prominent religious minorities as well. Some 9.90% of citizens are Protestant or Catholic; 1.69% are Hindu; 0.72% are Buddhist; and 0.05% self-identify as Confucian. Although official statistics are lacking, Indonesia is also home to several million practitioners of indigenous religions, known today as "ancestral religions" (*agama leluhur*; see Chapter 3 and Hefner 2018; Maarif et al. 2019).

Indonesia is also the world's third largest electoral democracy, after India and the United States. The country boasts the largest economy in Southeast Asia and the tenth largest in the world. Once one of the poorest nations in the global south, Indonesia has made "enormous gains in poverty reduction, cutting the poverty rate by more than half since 1999, to 9.78% in 2020" (World Bank 2020). Its secure middle class has grown from 4% of the population in 1984 to more than 20% today, with an additional 20% of the population living close to middle-class standing. Women in Indonesia today enjoy some of the highest rates of educational achievement and labor force participation in the Muslim-majority world (Chapter 5).

Beyond simple factual matters like these, however, Indonesia can at times seem hard to characterize, not least with regard to questions of Islam, democracy, and

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-1

citizen belonging. Are the culture and social organization of Islam different from their counterparts in the Middle East? Does Islamic higher education differ in its methods and message? And what about the social roles of Muslim women: are they distinctive? Do non-Muslims enjoy civil rights equal to those of Muslims? Is Indonesia a functioning electoral democracy? Or, as is often heard today, has Indonesian politics since the return to electoral democracy in 1998–9 been so blighted by clientelism, majoritarian intolerance, and deal-making that we must now speak of a regression in the quality of democracy (Mujani and Liddle 2021; Power 2018)?

Questions like these hover at the margins of the contemporary study of Indonesia, and they are at the heart of the inquiry this book undertakes. In recent years these same questions have taken on greater urgency as a result of developments not just in Indonesia but in the broader Muslim-majority world. By 2013, the hopeful dreams of the 2011 Arab spring had given way to the somber realization that in all of the Arab Muslim nations progress toward pluralist democracy had either stalled or halted entirely (Brown 2013; Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015; Volpi and Stein 2015; Zeghal 2016). It has long been recognized, of course, that Arab Muslims comprise just some 20% of the world's Muslim population. In addition, as the political scientists Alfred Stepan and Graeme Robertson pointed out a generation ago, the democratic "electoral deficit" once seemed to be more of an *Arab* than a *Muslim* problem (Stepan and Robertson 2003). However, as the political scientist Ahmet T. Kuru (2019a:53) has demonstrated, the number of Arab-majority countries that "underachieve" relative to their income levels has actually grown in the years since Stepan and Robertson's study. Meanwhile, beyond the Arab Middle East, several of the Muslim-majority nations that Stepan and Robertson had regarded as solid democratic performers – Mali, Bangladesh, and Turkey, among others – have experienced a notable decline in the quality of their democracy. No less serious, area specialists have begun to speak not just of democratic regression but of a "crisis of citizenship in the Arab world," as well as other Muslim-majority lands (Meijer and Butenschøn 2017). Analysts have emphasized that, although patronage and clientelism have compounded the problem, the crisis centers as much on the "relationship between citizens themselves" (ibid.:3), not least with regard to matters of ethnicity, religion, gender, and class (ibid.:12).

Indonesia does not provide an unambiguous exception to these Muslim-world trends. As the sociologist Vedi Hadiz observed several years ago, the Indonesia that exited from thirty-two years of authoritarian rule in 1998–9 demonstrates that neither liberal democracy nor theocratic authoritarianism "constitutes the inevitable terminus of modern Islamic politics" (Hadiz 2016:2). This is to say that social and political trends in this vast country remain complex and contentious. On the one hand, the country deftly navigated a return to electoral democracy after 1998, and it has continued to hold free and fair – albeit money politics inflected (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019) – elections in the years since. For more than a generation, the country's Muslim intelligentsia and civil society leaders have engaged in bold

educational outreach that has convinced most of the Muslim public of the benefits of democracy and pluralist citizenship (Chapters 2, 4, and 5; Hefner 2000; Kersten 2015; Latif 2008). Since the 1990s, Indonesia's Islamic higher educational system has pioneered citizenship curricula emphasizing inclusivity and equality across religious communities (Chapter 5). The country's major Muslim women's organizations, the largest in the world, have implemented forward-looking policies on family health, women's education, child marriage, and sexual trafficking (Chapter 6; Aryanti 2013; Qibtiyah 2019; Syamsiyatun 2008). As Danielle N. Lussier and Steven Fish have observed (2012:74), Indonesia also has "extraordinary levels of civic engagement," with rates of membership in civic associations well above those of its Southeast Asian neighbors and with the world's highest rates of "inter-personal sociability" (see Chapter 5). By these and many other measures, Indonesia is one of the most dynamic countries in Southeast Asia as well as the broader Muslim world.

Notwithstanding these achievements, in recent years the Muslim proponents of democracy and citizen inclusivity in this country have faced fierce headwinds, including those emanating from within the Muslim community itself. The political opening that began with the *Reformasi* transition brought with it an upsurge in the numbers and assertiveness of Islamist militias (Chapter 4; Barron, Jaffrey, and Varshney 2014; Jaffrey 2020). These same years saw a sharp increase in violence against religious minorities, including the country's small Ahmadi and Shi'a communities (Burhani 2013a, 2018; Lindsey and Pausacker 2016; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2019). Having been declared the freest country in Southeast Asia in the early 2000s by the international human rights organization, Freedom House, since 2010 Indonesia, has been ranked as only partially free (Freedom House 2017; cf. Fox 2012). Having once also been celebrated as "one of the least polarized democracies in Asia" (Slater and Arugay 2018:104), Indonesia in the 2010s witnessed a "return of ideological competition" (Warburton and Aspinall 2019). The polarization has pitted the supporters of an Indonesian variety of multireligious citizenship against Islamist proponents of Muslim supremacism in civic and political affairs (Aspinall 2015; Bourchier 2019; Menchik and Trost 2018).

From Conservative Turn to Agonistic Plurality

In the face of seemingly contradictory developments like these, several years ago one of the most distinguished Western analysts of Indonesian Islam, the Dutch anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen (2011, 2013a), concluded that since the early 2000s Indonesia has experienced a "conservative turn" in matters of Islam and politics (Chapters 2 and 4). "The transition from authoritarian to democratic rule in Indonesia," van Bruinessen wrote, "has been accompanied by the apparent decline of the liberal Muslim discourse that was dominant during the 1970s and 1980s and the increasing prominence of Islamist and fundamentalist interpretations of Islam" (van Bruinessen 2011:ii). The three developments van Bruinessen cited as

indices of the conservative turn were the widespread formation of Islamist militias (Chapter 4), anti-liberal pushback on women's rights (Chapter 6), and majoritarian intolerance of religious minorities (Chapter 2). Since van Bruinessen wrote his essay, longtime political analysts of Indonesia have sounded a related if more general alarm. Some have observed that "[a]fter almost two decades of praise for Indonesia's democratic achievements, a scholarly consensus has begun to emerge that Indonesian democracy is in regression" (Warburton and Aspinall 2019:255; see also Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019; Hadiz 2017; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2019; Power and Warburton 2020).

This book will not take direct exception to these characterizations of Indonesia's regression from the liberal democratic ideal. In fact, one of this book's core ambitions is to trace the causes and consequences of exclusivist currents in politics and society, including but not limited to those involving anti-democratic Islamists (see also Schäfer 2019). Rather than trying to present a rosy alternative to the conservative turn thesis, then, my argument in this book is that religious culture and politics in Indonesia are best characterized not in terms of a single trend or grand scheme but as an unfinished and contentious project of nation-making and citizen belonging. The process has been shaped by a number of social forces, including the activities of carry-over elites from the authoritarian New Order, competition between democratic and anti-democratic Muslim groupings, the growth of a consumer-oriented middle class, and the commercialization of the social and entertainment media at the heart of the country's public sphere (Bourchier 2019; Heryanto 2018; Hoesterey 2012; Rakhmani 2016; Weintraub 2011). In other words, and to borrow a phrase from the French social theorist, Chantal Mouffe (1999, 2005), Indonesia is a nation best characterized as not "conservative" or even "Islamic" in any singular way but as the site of an especially virulent "agonistic pluralism." A society, polity, or social domain can be deemed agonistically plural when its major protagonists continue to interact in an otherwise nonviolent manner but disagree on the basic rights and obligations of citizens, as well as broader notions of the public good (see Salvatore 2007). Here in Indonesia, the agonism in question often centers on the question of citizen rights and, in particular, whether Muslims and non-Muslims as well as men and women should enjoy equal rights.

To come to terms with questions like these, this book adopts what I call a "dispersive" and multi-sectoral approach to society, politics, and citizen belonging. I borrow the phrase dispersive from the anthropologist John Bowen (Bowen 1993:10). A dispersive approach puts aside the idea that developments in society are uniform across all social fields because governed by a single discourse or "grand scheme" (Schielke 2010a) – be it Islam, neoliberalism, capitalism, or some other ideological current. Building on the sociologist Jose Casanova's insights into secularization and social differentiation in modern societies (Casanova 1994), my approach emphasizes that no modern society is ever a seamlessly integrated whole; differentiations and "developmental tensions" (Maxwell 2006) operate across the broader social landscape. Inasmuch as this is the case, we should not be surprised

to see that trends can operate according to different regulatory logics in politics, economics, education, and gender relations.

Expressed in different theoretical terms, and drawing on the scholarship of the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, and the American anthropologist Michael Peletz, my aim in this book is to explore the "diversity of variably structured fields" operative in Muslim Indonesia (Peletz 2022:30; see also Bourdieu 1977). Rather than assuming uniformity across social fields, then, my approach explores the frictions (Tsing 2005), incommensurabilities (Boellstorff 2005), and/or synergistic "carry-overs" (Simon 2014) that operate within and across different social domains. Whether with regard to matters of popular religiosity (Chapter 3), Islamic movements and democracy (Chapter 4), Islamic education (Chapter 5), gender relations (Chapter 6), or Islamic ethics and law (Chapter 7), the discourses and values operative across social sectors here in Indonesia are varied because they are engendered in and "entangled with" (Latour 2005) diverse media, assemblages, and normativities. Some spheres appear to show conservative or anti-liberal influences; however, many do not. In fact, in some domains, such as Islamic higher education and Muslim mass organizations (including those for women), Indonesia is among the most innovative and forward-looking Muslim nations in the world.

Another difference between this book's agonistic and dispersive perspective and recent talk of conservative turns is that, even while recognizing that the latter trends may be pronounced with regard to state policies and structures, my goal here is to explore the ideals and practices of politics, ethics, and citizen belonging across the whole of society, rather than in relation to the state alone. In adopting this societal perspective, I do not mean to imply that Muslim society or "Islam" is the primary driver of political developments in Indonesia today. As Ahmet Kuru (2019a) has shown is also the case across the Muslim-majority world, trends in Indonesian society and politics instead reflect a path-dependent interplay of organizational and ideological influences. The most consequential of these include political and structural legacies peculiar to Indonesian society rather than some invariant feature of Islam or Muslim social organization. As a number of analysts of state-level politics in Indonesia have shown, foremost among these structural legacies is "the limited ascendancy gained by reformist or rights-based impulses in many arenas of contestation during the first decade" of the *Reformasi* era (Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019:694). But even on this point Indonesia's agonistic plurality can surprise. In domains as varied as Islamic higher education, Muslim mass organizations, and women's rights, Muslim democrats *have* gained significant influence and at times even achieved ascendancy. Talk of "backsliding" and "conservative turns" risks obscuring the creative yet agonistic dynamics operative in these and other domains beyond the state and formal politics.

In addition to providing a society-centered perspective on the quality of democracy, citizenship, and gender relations in Indonesia, then, this book aims to provide a corrective to an assumption still widespread in Western policy circles: that Muslim culture and politics are uniform around the world because they are products of

something called "Islam," which can in turn be characterized in terms of unchanging scriptural or civilizational legacies. In taking exception to such essentializing approaches, this book aligns itself with recent scholarship on Muslim politics in the disciplines of political science and sociology, including foundational studies by Muhammad Ayoob and Danielle Lussier (2020), John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed (2007), Muqtedar Khan (2019), Ahmet Kuru (2019a), Peter Mandaville (2014), and Sami Zubaida (2003), among others. All of these authors have adopted a contextual and path-dependent framework to analyze the varieties of Muslim politics and public ethics operative in our age. All underscore that there is no single pattern of Muslim politics and citizen belonging. These authors also demonstrate that, although they typically involve an "interaction between text, discursive method, and personified knowledge" (Mandaville 2007:101), the ideals and practices that constitute Muslim political traditions today are not laid down for all time in scripture but are shaped by Muslims' ever-evolving engagements with modern media, political economies, and gender regimes.

Muslim Indonesia today is in the throes of especially complex engagements of this sort, and this book seeks to explore just which interactions are conducive to inclusive understandings and practices of Islam, nation, and citizen belonging, and which are not. Although it emphasizes that there is much that is specific to the Indonesian story, this book also recognizes that there are common features to Muslim culture and politics around the world today, not least with regard to what the distinguished scholar of Islamic legal history, Wael Hallaq, has described as the "central domain of the moral" in politics and public reasoning (Hallaq 2013:169). An appreciation of just what is unique to Indonesia and just what is shared with other Muslim-majority societies, however, requires a sustained examination of the broader ways of life, learning, and social belonging in which Indonesian Muslims are today involved.

Knowing and Practicing Islam

Another theoretical literature informs the approach to Islam, public ethics, and citizenship adopted in this book, one that draws on research in my own primary subdisciplines, political anthropology, and the anthropology of Islam. As with recent explorations of Muslim politics in sociology and comparative politics, anthropologists have long emphasized that Muslim-majority societies are not governed by an all-determining and uniform scheme known as "Islam." In a widely cited review of anthropological research on Islam and politics, Benjamin Soares and Filippo Osella (2010:2) warned against "automatically privileging religion as the principal . . . foundation for Muslim identity and political practice" (see also Osella and Osella 2009). In a similar spirit, Samuli Schielke has wryly observed that "there is too much Islam in the anthropology of Islam" (Schielke 2010b:1). As the chapters that follow make clear, in this book I too seek to explore the varied influences on Muslim self-identifications and practice. I then explore the implications of these

engagements for actors' complex understandings of politics, gender relations, and citizen belonging. I foreground questions like these not just because I seek to build a bridge between comparative politics, sociology, and anthropology but because for more than a century ethical and epistemological questions like these have been at the center of debates in Muslim societies around the world (Ahmed 2016; Kersten 2015; Kuru 2019a, 2019b).

Anthropological opinion on just how to explore these matters has undergone several notable changes over the past generation. Early on in the debate, the celebrated anthropologist Talal Asad (b. 1932) drew on the scholarship of the philosophers Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) and Michel Foucault (1994) to suggest that the most effective way to study Muslims is by recognizing Islam as a "discursive tradition," the cohesiveness of which originates in the fact that the tradition "includes and relates itself to the founding text of the Qur'an and the Hadith" (Asad 1986:20). Asad quickly went on to explain that any particular practice or tradition does more than orient itself to scriptural sources in this way. In particular, a practice can be deemed Islamic inasmuch as "it is authorized by the discursive traditions of Islam, and is so taught to Muslims" as "an instituted practice . . . into which Muslims are inducted as Muslims" (Asad 1986:21). Inspired by Foucault's epistemic approach to knowledge and power, Asad explained that the intimate relationship of pedagogy and practice to authorized traditions means that Islamic discursive traditions (like all others) involve "a relationship of power to truth" (Asad 1986:22; see also Asad 2003).

Anthropological opinion on how to study Muslims and Islam has shifted somewhat since Asad wrote his pathbreaking essay (see Bowen 2003, 2015). In a manner that shows clear affinities with ongoing developments in the comparative politics of Islam, recent studies have come to place greater emphasis on history, context, and heterogeneity than scriptural referents and religious disciplining alone (see Bowen 1993; Laidlaw 2014:68–70; Peletz 2022). For example, in a richly textured ethnography of Muslims in America, Zareena Grewal has pointed out that

> [o]rthodoxy in Asad's sense is not simply derived from foundational texts; rather, the relationships of power that constitute orthodoxy are sustained . . . by the deployments of foundational texts as well as a whole host of political and social factors that empower some Muslims and not others.
>
> *(Grewal 2014:77)*

In her study of Shi'i piety in south Lebanon, the anthropologist Lara Deeb has painted a similarly dispersive portrait of the influences shaping Muslim subjectivities and society. Rather than being grounded in scriptural sources alone, actors' knowledge and values show the imprint of engagements with consumerism, new social media, higher education, and new practices of social intimacy, among other things (Deeb 2006:20; cf. Schielke 2015; Smith-Hefner 2019). In her study of the Malaysian Muslim feminist organization, Sisters in Islam (SIS), the anthropologist

Azza Basarudin reached a similarly intersectional conclusion. The activists among whom she worked sought "to advocate for women's rights from within Islam" rather than from a secular liberal perspective. Importantly, however, they decided "which aspects of Islamic tradition to draw upon to establish new relations of religious texts to cultural and historical contexts" not on the basis of scriptural rationales alone but through "a strategy of claiming rights that combines feminist hermeneutics, constitutional law, and the principles of human rights" with "women's experiences and lived realities" (Basarudin 2016:3, 6).

As these examples illustrate, some of the values and knowledge Muslim actors cultivate in various social spheres "carry over" into other domains, including those popularly identified as Islamic. As the anthropologist Gregory Simon has demonstrated in a study of Islam and subjectivity in West Sumatra, the converse can also be true: "the work involved in [actors'] fashioning themselves as moral" (Simon 2014:1) in an Islamic manner can carry over into domains of value and practice sometimes regarded as "non-religious." Because different ideals and practices of selfhood and public ethics operate in different spheres, individual actors often find themselves obliged to "work to more or less integrate different systems and information into the living of particular lives" (Simon 2014:7; cf. Marsden 2005; Schielke 2015). The result can be complex assemblages of knowledge and authority that draw on multiple media (Eickelman and Anderson 1999; Heryanto 2018; Weintraub 2011) and diverse traditions of knowledge and practice (Barth 1993, 2002; Hefner 2018).

In his study of Islamic courts in contemporary Malaysia, Michael Peletz reaches a similar conclusion but does so from an institutional rather than an actor-based perspective. Peletz's long-term research demonstrates that rather than being governed by "Islamization" or some other uniquely Islamic logic, shariah courts in Malaysia blend common-law legal practices inherited from the British with "long-standing Malay practices" and "Japanese systems of management" (Peletz 2013:606). The result is that Malaysia's shariah judiciary is a "congeries of contested sites characterized by the interplay of a number of heavily freighted, globally inflected discourses, practices, values, and interests of disparate origins" and "not reducible to a single logic" (ibid.: 607; cf. Barth 1993, 2002; Marsden 2005; Simon 2014:192).

Contextual entanglements like these are not unique to Muslim societies in modern times; they played a central role in the formation of Islam's earliest legal and theological commentaries, as well as its first state institutions. In her study of women, marriage, and slavery in classical Islam, Kecia Ali (2010) has demonstrated that early Islamic jurisprudence on gender was influenced by values and practices carried over from pre-Islamic tribal organization, gender hierarchies, and cultures of human bondage. In his now-classic study of state and religion in Islamic societies, the historian Ira Lapidus concluded that "[t]he historical evidence . . . shows that there is no single Islamic model for states and religious institutions, but rather several competing ones" (Lapidus 1996:4). Over the course of the eighth and

ninth centuries C.E., Lapidus showed, a significant change took place as a result of carryovers from polities across the region: "Arab Muslim practices and concepts . . . evolved into substantial conformity with Byzantine and Sassanian precedents" (Lapidus 1996:8). As the late historian of Islam, Shahab Ahmed (2016) has shown, cross-fertilizations of this sort can yield culturally expansive as well as socially restrictive outcomes. More than a thousand years ago, Middle Eastern Muslims' engagements with Greek medicine, natural science, and philosophy laid the foundation for unprecedented Muslim achievements in these fields (Adamson 2016; Gannage 2017). The resulting renaissance in learning allowed the medieval Middle East to become the world's leading center of innovation in medicine, natural science, mathematics, and philosophy (Gutas 1998; Kuru 2019a; Sabra 1994). The cross-fertilization also enabled Muslim scholars to carry over insights from philosophy and the natural sciences into their understanding and practice of Islam.

There is a broader theoretical lesson here, regarding how to study Islam and Muslim traditions of knowledge as a "historical and human phenomenon . . . in its plenitude and complexity" (Ahmed 2016:5). As the anthropologist Magnus Marsden has shown in his ethnography of Chitral Muslims in Pakistan, a key feature of this plenitude is that actors may "inhabit multiple identities, which they work hard . . . to create in the face of powerful constraints" (Marsden 2005:31; see also Beatty 1999:156). The evidence from these and other studies demonstrates that in all human societies, including those Muslim, actors' identities and aspirations are rarely if ever grounded in any single worldview or tradition of knowledge but operate on the basis of "coexistence of various motivations, aims, and identities that can and often do conflict" (Schielke 2010a; see also Barth 1993; Gregg 1998; Marsden 2005; Ewing 1990). At times, of course, actors may imagine that their lives and social worlds can be governed by a single regulatory logic or "grand scheme" (Schielke 2010a), be it Islam, Western liberalism, religious nationalism, or some other normative tradition. However, the reality is that "all societies, including small-scale societies, are made up of a plurality of institutional moralities" (Zigon 2008:162), and, whether fully aware of it or not, actors engage these in complex and intersectional ways. Seen from this hybrid perspective, no Muslim society is ever just "Muslim," any more than any "Western liberal" or "capitalist" society is just liberal or capitalist.

Building on insights like these, some of the scholars who have been in the vanguard of the anthropological study of Islam since the early 2000s go one analytic step further. They emphasize that individuals' experience is not simply plural or imbricational but tends to be "situational, unsystematic, and ambiguous" in a manner that puts in question the very possibility of experiential consistency across social domains (Schielke 2015:56). In an important study of youth culture in contemporary Alexandria, Egypt, Schielke reported that his interlocutors there encountered "an unpredictable coexistence of different nuances, moments, and registers" in the course of their daily lives; most responded to this plurality by "shifting between at times opposed . . . outlooks of life, being firmly something at one time and strictly

something else at another time" (2015:57). Muslim actors (like people everywhere) "routinely shift between conflicting self-representations, and are regularly torn between conflicting self-ideals and aims" (Schielke 2010a:26).

While duly recognizing the plurality of social domains and ethical registers that actors everywhere encounter, however, the present book will suggest that actors' engagement with moral and social plurality need not be so discontinuous or unintegrated as Schielke's Egyptian interlocutors report. At times the experience of ethical and epistemological plurality can lead to a problematization of one's previously held assumptions and a "moral breakdown." These processes can in turn give rise to creative moments during which individuals and whole groups engage in "working on oneself" in a self-consciously reflective and rationalizing manner (Zigon 2008:165; see also Laidlaw 2014). In his study of moral selfhood among the Minangkabau of Western Sumatra, Simon reached just this conclusion, one similar to the perspective on values and identities adopted in this book. Simon emphasizes that reflexive adjustments in an individual or group's worldview and priorities occur not just in times of moral breakdown, but in the course of actors' daily movements across the diverse value spheres that make up a society. Indeed, Simon points out, at the very heart of our experience of selfhood lie processes whereby "individual minds and bodies bring together and work to more or less integrate different systems and information into the living of particular lives. . . . Selves are thus emergent cohesive qualities of this process" (Simon 2014:6–7).

These person-centered and reflexive accounts highlight a vital dimension of all social experiences, and they inform the understanding of agency and subjectivity I deploy in this book. However, as Peletz's study of Malaysia's shariah courts reminds us, the social processes that produce and reproduce moral traditions and political orders over time are never the product of individual experience alone; their ascendance depends on broader institutional assemblages and class formations produced and reproduced over time (Hefner 1985; Kuru 2019a; Latour 1993). These latter processes have political genealogies more complex than any single actor's experience. It was in just this spirit that, in his much-cited essay on "Religious Rejections of the World and Their Directions" (Weber 1946), Max Weber emphasized that all societies are made up of diverse value spheres, including (in his account) those economic, political, religious, and aesthetic. However, Weber added, at times the social classes dominant in one sphere may attempt to gain ascendance over the power elites prevailing in others. The result is that, as with modern capitalism in the West or the Khomeini-instituted Islamic Republic in Iran, the gravitational influence of, say, a capitalist class, a religious elite, or a political movement may extend well beyond the domain in which the social grouping in question initially operated (cf. Haenni 2005). The ascendance typically occurs in the aftermath of certain critical junctures in politics and society, during which different classes, movements, and coalitions unite to extend one value system – and the class interests and assemblages on which its production and reproduction depend – over other actors, classes, and cultural domains (see Latour 2005).

Nowhere are these interplays of structure and subjectivity more commonplace and consequential than in matters of modern politics, nationhood, and citizen belonging. As Kuru has observed, when it comes to matters of social belonging and citizenship, a key characteristic of most political orders is that at some point governing elites work to establish a more or less hegemonic "ideological and institutional legacy" (Kuru 2009:278). This hegemonic structure is put in place in an effort to socialize and enforce ground rules and disciplines for public ethics, class privilege, and citizen belonging. As Chantal Mouffe has also observed, sometimes the "agonistic dynamic of the pluralist system" may not succeed in the way its promoters had intended; the resulting struggle may give rise to "confrontations over essentialist identities and non-negotiable moral values" (Mouffe 1999:756). However, as Kuru also demonstrates, often times a ruling class or dominant coalition may succeed at scaling up and stabilizing this ideological and institutional assemblage through the "establishment of institutions that generate self-reinforcing path-dependent processes" (ibid.). Once in place, this path-dependent order may be reinforced through processes of ideological indoctrination, institutional coordination, and political control (Kuru 2009:30; see also Salvatore and Levine 2005:7).

Muslim politics and citizen belonging in Indonesia today are in the throes of just such critical-juncture contentions with regard to Muslim politics, public ethics, gender relations, and citizen belonging. As Carool Kersten (2015) and Rachael Diprose, Dave McRae, and Vedi R. Hadiz (2019) have noted, and as I argued in an earlier book (Hefner 2018), here in post-Suharto Indonesia rival Muslim movements have promoted opposing models of Islamic ethics, gender relations, and citizen belonging. A key determinant of just which models are broadly influential, and which are not, has been "the extent to which new and reformist actors have been able to enter and establish themselves" in a particular state or societal sector and, from there, exercise influence over the broader public sphere (ibid.).

What has made contentious politics like this especially complex is that its outcomes have not been solely determined by developments in the formal, state-oriented political sphere. *Reformasi* Indonesia's return to electoral democracy after thirty-two years of authoritarian rule coincided with a deepening resurgence of Islamic observance across broad swaths of society (Chaplin 2021; Hadiz 2016; Hilmy 2010; Hoesterey 2012, 2017; Robinson 2009; Smith-Hefner 2019; van Doorn-Harder 2006). The resurgence and the return to electoral democracy also coincided with two other far-reaching developments: the rapid growth of new communications media, including cell phones and the internet, and the growing commercialization of large numbers of social goods and services (Hadiz 2016, 2017; Rakhmani 2016). Some analysts have concluded that there was a direct and (from a democratic perspective) unhappy convergence across these spheres in the sense that "[a]s Indonesians have become more religious, they have also become more socially conservative" (Warburton 2019). However, as will become clear in the chapters that follow, the broader evidence indicates that, on matters of Muslim politics, citizenship, and social belonging, neither conservatism nor some other

repressively developmentalist trend is everywhere the norm. In fact, as Indonesians have become more "religious," debates over just what varieties of Islamic religiosity are most appropriate for matters of public life, middle-class consumption, and citizen belonging have become more rather than less pervasive (Feillard and Madinier 2006; Hefner 2018; Madinier 2015:452). In other words, whether in matters of national politics, public ethics, or religious observance, the broader trend here in Indonesia is agonistically plural in a manner that yields outcomes more varied and contradictory than "conservative turns" or homogenizing processes of "Islamization" alone.

From Securitization to Civilization

There is an additional reason to emphasize the plurality of ways in which Muslims here in Indonesia come to know and practice Islam, politics, and citizen belonging. As Muslim societies have become the subject of security concerns in Western policy circles over the past thirty years, many analysts have been unaware of or chosen to ignore Muslim civilization's rich legacy of political, ethical, and cultural plurality. In a manner that, ironically enough, echoes Salafist and exclusivist Islamist claims that there is just one way of knowing and practicing Islam (see Chapter 4), some Western analysts assume Muslim politics and cultures are simple, singular things. The cultural models operative in these domains are assumed to have been laid down for all time by scripture or in the corpus of Islamic ethical and legal traditions known as *shariah*; the latter is in turn mistakenly assumed to be uniform and unchanging in its understandings and practices. It was in this spirit that a scholar whom I came to know and respect through my participation in a Harvard-based discussion group in the late 1990s, Samuel P. Huntington (1927–2008), made his influential but deeply mistaken claim that "[i]n Islam . . . no distinction exists between religion or politics or between the spiritual and the secular, and political participation was historically an alien concept." As a result, Huntington argued, "Islam . . . has not been hospitable to democracy" (Huntington 1996:208).

In an earlier book, I reviewed the conceptual and empirical missteps of Huntington's model (Hefner 2000). Ahmet Kuru's 2019 *Islam, Authoritarianism, and Underdevelopment* (Kuru 2019a) provides an updated and more definitive critique of Huntington's approach, as well as a fully formed theoretical alternative. Kuru's book and those of Mandaville (2007) and Khan (2019), along with anthropologists Bowen (2003), Deeb (2006), Hoesterey (2012), Marsden (2005), Peletz (2020), and Weintraub (2010, 2011), all provide vivid illustrations of the contextual and dispersive approach to Muslim knowledge, identity, and belonging required to move beyond essentializing characterizations of Muslims and Muslim civilization.

The approach I employ in this book, then, seeks to integrate scholarship in my own primary discipline, anthropology, with a comparative politics and sociology of Islam. It does so by exploring the contingencies and entanglements (Latour 2005) that determine the relative influence and appeal of different modes of Muslim

politics, learning, and citizen belonging here in Indonesia. My approach foregrounds what Wael Hallaq has described as the "central domain of the moral" in Muslim politics and public ethics (Hallaq 2013:169). But I understand the moral not just in terms of subjectivity or the "care of the self" (Foucault 1994) but also in relation to public ethics and what can be called the "care of the social" (see Sandel 1996). The chapters that follow also explore these matters of subjective and societal value not in opposition to political or material forces but by way of the "connections between ideas and material conditions" (Kuru 2019a:xv; see Hadiz 2016, 2017; Rakhmani 2016).

Borrowing a phrase from the Harvard political philosopher Michael Sandel (1984, 1996), the approach deployed in this book is one that proceeds through an examination of the identities and "encumbrances" actors bring to their social and political lives. More than a generation ago, the Nobel prize–winning economist Amartya Sen called for the theoretical formulation of a similarly encumbered model of the actor. In doing so, he took exception to the tendency in mainstream rational-choice theories to portray social agents as utility-maximizing automatons whose subjectivity involves little more than calculating the relative ranking of given "preferences" or "tastes." Much like Francis Fukuyama (2018) in an important recent study, Sen dismissed the resulting portrait of human actors as a "rational fool" (Sen 1977). This species of actor is a fool, Sen explained, because the model devotes little attention to the social, political, and psychological processes whereby real-world actors come to know themselves and prioritize the ends they pursue. The rational actor model also assumes that the simple ranking of more or less settled preferences is *the* defining feature of subjective experience and rationality. But the rationality and self-identity of real human beings are never so monadic as such models imply. Our identity and practical rationality build on reflexive engagements with others in the community or communities with which we identify (Hefner 1990:234–44; Laidlaw 2014; Taylor 1992, 2004). This is to say that an encumbered self is a self that devotes herself not just to the care of the self but to public ethics and the care of the social, be that Aristotle's *polis*, a Muslim *ummah*, a nation-state, or other loci of public recognition and belonging.

A related insight has come to inform recent political-economic analyses of Muslim politics, society, and subjectivity. In earlier studies, analysts often took Muslim actors' commitment to "Islam" as a simple and more or less primordial given. The assumption was that what we call Islam, shariah, or Islamic tradition is something easily known and everywhere the same. Yet as the history of Islamic ethics, mysticism, science, and politics shows so vividly, questions concerning just "What is Islam?" (Ahmed 2016) are complex ones with which Muslims have grappled since the age of the Prophet (Khan 2019; Kuru 2019a:xiv–xvi). As the late Shahab Ahmed observed, Muslim notables and scholars have long demonstrated an awareness that "God's Truth is a *differentiated truth of many layers* – differentiated according to the capacity of . . . individuals in society to *know* it," and thus giving rise to "differentiated epistemologies for the determination of truth" (Ahmed

2016:24). The exploration of this core feature of Islamic ways of knowing and acting in an Indonesian context is another thread that runs through the chapters in this book.

Struggle for the Means of Knowledge Production

A striking illustration of Indonesia's complex and agonistic plurality, and on which later chapters in this book will have more to say, has to do with trends in Islamic learning and their implications for the Muslim public sphere. As background to the chapters that follow, it is important to say a few words about these developments, which have been central to the critical-juncture refiguration of Islam, democracy, and citizen belonging in this country over the past thirty years.

Although Indonesia has had a vibrant Islamic educational sector for more than a century (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007; Subhan 2012), enrollments in Islamic day schools, boarding schools, and after-school programs soared in the post-1998, *Reformasi* era. Some of the most politically consequential developments were those taking place in Islamic higher education (Chapter 5). Indonesia has several Islamic college networks, but two stand above all others: a system of state-sponsored Islamic universities and colleges (*Universitas Islam Negeri/UIN* and *Institut Agama Islam Negeri/IAIN*) that enrolls hundreds of thousands of students and, second, a privately operated but no less impressive network of 160 colleges and universities run by the Muhammadiyah, a modernist Muslim organization established in 1912 that today has some thirty million members (Brankley Abbas 2021; Bush 2014; Hefner 2009; Jabali and Jamhari 2002; Lukens-Bull 2013).

Beginning in the early 1990s, both of these higher educational systems restructured their faculties to incorporate disciplines long seen as separate from conventional varieties of Islamic education, including economics, law, medicine, and the social sciences. Some of these Islamic universities also led the way in developing new curricular materials on citizenship, gender equality, and civic tolerance (see Chapter 5, and Bagir 2018; Jackson and Parker 2008; Lukens-Bull 2013). More boldly yet – and providing additional evidence of the "epistemological turn" (Feener 2007; Latif 2008) so widespread in mainline Indonesian Muslim circles – these universities also opened their courses on Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*), and other Islamic sciences to historical and empirical methodologies (see Abdullah 2020). Notable among the disciplines now drawn into the study of Islamic ethics and law were empirical sciences like sociology, anthropology, gender studies, and comparative legal studies (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007; Kersten 2015; Lindsey 2012). Lessons from these disciplines soon carried over into discussions about how to reform Islamic public ethics, not least with regard to questions of citizenship, gender equality, and democracy (see Chapters 5 and 7).

Linked as they were to far-reaching changes underway in Muslim civic associations like Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, these educational initiatives soon

began to have an impact on Muslim society as a whole. By the late 1990s, a new consensus had emerged in mainline Muslim educational and intellectual circles in Indonesia, centered on two convictions: first, that Islam does not require the establishment of a so-called Islamic state, and, second, that constitutional democracy offers the most appropriate platform for governance and public ethics in a modern Muslim-majority society (Chapter 2, 5; Hefner 2000). Not surprisingly, not everyone in Muslim society agreed with these conclusions. Although national elections showed that the majority of Indonesian Muslims favored democracy and multireligious citizenship, an Islamist minority continued to invoke an idealized image of classical Islamic history to call for Muslim supremacism in civic and political affairs. Reform-minded Muslim democrats held firm, however, rejecting these proposals for a differentiated citizenship. More boldly yet, from 2015 to 2023, Nahdlatul Ulama leaders issued a series of formal and lengthy declarations in which they called for reforms to not merely Islamic education but the entire tradition of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) dealing with non-Muslims and citizenship (see Chapter 7; Gerakan Pemuda Ansor and Baytarrahmah 2018; Lohlker 2021; Staquf 2019, 2021; C.H. Taylor 2018). Although not quite as expansive in their proposals, reformist intellectuals in Muhammadiyah made no less forceful appeals (Burhani 2019; Mu'ti and Khoirudin 2019). As later chapters will show, these and other proposals for the reform of Islamic law, education, and public ethics are among the most ambitiously far-reaching in the Muslim-majority world.

Not surprisingly, however, these calls for educational and jurisprudential reform, not least with regard to matters of citizen belonging, also generated controversy. Exclusivist Islamist scholars like Hartono Ahmad Jaiz (b. 1953) and the more intellectually gifted Adian Husaini (b. 1965; see Husaini and Hidayat 2002) condemned the proposals as proof of "apostasy" and "Western liberal hegemony" (see also Weng 2022). In a similar vein, exclusivist Muslims in groups like "Straight-Line NU" (*NU Garis Lurus*) took advantage of the internet to mount fierce challenges to the reform-minded NU leadership. These critics decried the leadership's appeals for democracy and inclusive citizenship as betrayals of "authentic" NU traditions (Abdullah and Osman 2018; Iqbal 2014, 2021).

Although exclusivist Islamists have only a small perch in Islamic higher education and the broader Muslim intelligentsia, they are a vocal and well-organized – albeit still minority – presence in society at large. A national survey conducted in 2012 indicated that fewer than 7% of Indonesian Muslims subscribe to teachings of a broadly Saudi-Salafi sort, and the percentage active in movements of an assertively Salafi sort is only half that number (Woodward and Nurish 2017; cf. Chaplin 2021). However, the anti-pluralist currents in the Muslim community are not limited to the small number of Indonesians who self-identify as Salafis (see Chapter 4). Minako Sakai and Amelia Fauzia have shown that, since 2002, there has been a significant uptick in the proportion of the Muslim public, from 14% to 20%, who say they support the establishment of an "Islamic state" (*Negara Islam*; Sakai and Fauzia 2014). My own and others' research also indicates that

Islamists of a non-Salafi but exclusivist variety control two to three hundred among Indonesia's more than 66,000 madrasas and Islamic schools (see Chapter 5; N. Hasan 2006; Hefner 2009; Van Bruinessen 2008; Wahid 2013).

Islamists of varied persuasions have made even greater inroads into the mosque communities, Islamic study circles, and new social media that have blossomed across Indonesia since the early 2000s (see Chapters 2 and 4; Chaplin 2018, 2021; Slama 2017; Weng 2020). "The proliferation and establishment of private television channels [since the 1990s] and new modes of communication technologies have facilitated the rise of new preachers, such as Abdullah Gymnastiar, Arifin Ilham, Yusuf Mansur, Abdul Somad, Mamah Dedeh abd Felix Siauw" (Saat and Burhani 2020b:2; see also Hoesterey 2015). As the Austrian anthropologist Martin Slama has observed, "Preaching today consists not only of talking to a religious crowd . . . but also of personal exchanges between the preacher and his followers" on and through social media (Slama 2017:99). No less notably, as Indonesia's *Reformasi* era progressed, Islamist activists moved more rapidly than their mainline counterparts to take advantage of new social media (Ali 2011). With some 176.5 million users, Indonesia has the third largest number of Facebook users in the world. Online social media platforms like Twitter and WhatsApp are also widely used today, and their adoption has only accelerated the refiguration of authority and knowledge taking place in Muslim society as a whole (see Chapter 2; Abdullah and Osman 2018; Bubalo and Fealy 2005:51; Slama 2017). The result has been transformative: "the explosive growth of the social media . . . completely changed the method and style of communication of religious messages" (van Bruinessen 2021:21). More specifically, "[a]s control of media became less centralized and less regulated [in the Reformasi era], a flurry of self-produced and self-distributed videos featuring charismatic preachers emerged" (Weintraub 2011:6). Many featured a less hierarchical and relaxed approach to religious teaching. But many combined these relaxed *gaul* ("sociable," "hip"; see Smith-Hefner 2007b, 2019:130) styles with fiercely anti-liberal, anti-feminist, and anti-pluralist messaging (see Weng 2020, 2022; Hoesterey 2008:98).

Epistemological Populism Versus Systematic Eclecticism

As a result of these and other developments, the Islamic public sphere in Indonesia since the early 2000s has become a more diverse and competitive space than it had been twenty years earlier (Feillard and Madinier 2006; Hefner 2018). The social forces driving these changes have been many. Some had to do with changes in formal politics and political society and showed the influence of state policy, party politics, transnational movements, and trends in Islamic higher education. Others were linked to more diffuse societal changes, including the growth of the Muslim middle class, the rise of new social media (Slama 2017), and new patterns of Islamic consumption (Rakhmani 2016; Weintraub 2011). On matters of democracy and citizen belonging, however, there was a clear and striking contrast between

what Amin Abdullah has aptly described as Indonesia's "mainline" Muslim democrats and their "oppositional" Islamist rivals (Abdullah 2020; see also Bourchier 2019; Menchik 2019).

The two groups differed not just in their views on democracy and citizenship but in the modes of learning and epistemology through which they came to understand and promote their respective points of view. The mainline democrats presented their proposals to the Muslim public by explaining that the reforms in education they advocated were consistent with new currents in global Islamic thought that sought to reconstruct the Islamic sciences by linking them to methodologies and findings in the social sciences and humanities (A. Abdullah 2020; Kersten 2015). Their approaches drew on similarly pluralizing trends in Muslim democrat intellectual circles in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (Kersten 2017; Saeed 2008; Safi 2003). Approaches to Islamic ethics and politics in these circles were assessed, then, not in terms of their conformity to religious rules regarded as law-like and unchanging but in relation to outcomes – poverty reduction, economic growth, citizen equality, and so on – subject to assessment using the sciences of the world in conjunction with Islamic ethical values. In these and other regards, Indonesia's Muslim democrats developed pluralist epistemologies similar to those promoted by reform-minded Muslim intellectuals in other parts of the world (see Ahmed 2016; Kecia Ali 2006; Moosa 2001; Ramadan 2009).

Exclusivist Islamists in groups like the Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam*; FPI) and the Indonesian Council for Islamic Predication (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* [DDII]; see Chapter 4; Madinier 2015:436–40) dismissed the styles of learning promoted by Muslim democrats and educators in the State Islamic University system as "Western," "liberal," and, in a word, un-Islamic. These groups insist that Islamic law and ethics are divinely prescribed, easily understood, and unchanging. As a result, the outcomes of Islamic ethical programs should not be assessed using empirical instruments borrowed from the social sciences or in relation to social goals (social justice, poverty reduction, gender equality, etc.) derived from modern ethical concerns. Muslim democrats who insist otherwise, the exclusivist Islamists said, are either fools or Islam-denying apostates (see Chapters 4 and 7; cf. Brubaker 2019; Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022).

In dismissing their Muslim democrat rivals in this way, exclusivist Islamists have developed what can be described as a Muslim-world counterpart to the "epistemological populism" deployed over the past twenty years by far-right politicians and talk-show hosts in North America and Western Europe (Saurette and Gunster 2011:188–201; see also Mouffe 2005). By epistemological populism, I refer to a style of rhetorical contention that involves not public sphere debate over the fine points of rival proposals but a rhetorical style that engages in a pervasive stigmatization of rival ideas as inauthentic, elitist, and alien. Not coincidentally, and again like their far-right counterparts in Western countries, a key tactic of Islamist populists is to "claim to speak and act in the name of 'the people'" as against "the elite" (Brubaker 2019:33; see also Moffitt 2016).

Viewed comparatively, Islamist populism differs from its secular counterparts in the contemporary West in one notable regard: "the concept of the ummah [community of believers] substitutes for the notion of 'the people'" (Hadiz 2016:29). However, as Rogers Brubaker has shown, no matter what their civilizational location, most varieties of epistemological populism share certain trademark features. They rely on "a 'low' style" that "devalues complexity through rhetorical practices of simplicity, directness, and seeming self-evidence" (ibid.). In keeping with this stylistic low road, their rhetoric makes extensive use of insults, intimidation, and coarsened speech to deride more open and reasoned modes of public dialogue (see Brubaker 2019; Busbridge 2018; Saurette and Gunster 2011:188–201). In so doing, epistemological populists seek to deny not just the substance of their rivals' message but the pluralizing styles of learning and public reasoning to which their rivals are committed. Rather than an eclectic expansion of ethical aims and methodologies, epistemological populists promote textualist essentialism and anti-pluralist exclusivity (there is just one truth and only one way to understand it). Contrary to what is sometimes said, then, exclusivists are not more "literal" in their reading of scriptural sources. They are more doctrinaire and unsystematic. As a result of these and other disputations, Muslim politics in Indonesia has come to center on not just struggles for ascendancy among rival social groupings but contest for control of the means of Islamic learning and knowledge production.

As a result of these and other developments in Muslim society, the Muslim public sphere in Indonesia has developed a plurality and agonism far greater than had been the case in the well-controlled and authoritarian New Order (1966–98). By public sphere, I mean those social arenas where citizens come together for the purpose of "acting, arguing, and deliberating in common ways that are legitimated through a rational pursuit of collective interest," a process that also "implies a fair degree of transparence of communication among the actors" (Salvatore 2007:7; Calhoun 1992; Eickelman and Salvatore 2002; Salvatore and Levine 2005).

The concept of the public sphere is a notion that has been broadly utilized in political research on countries around the world since the 1990s. It acquired special importance in the aftermath of the transition from communism in Eastern Europe and in the course of a hoped-for "third wave" of democratization in the Middle East and North Africa (Eickelman 2002; Taylor 1992). As Salvatore has noted, "[d]uring the 1990s the public sphere was increasingly envisioned as the discursive infrastructure and the normative lubricant for a well-functioning civil society" (Salvatore 2007:1; see also Arato and Cohen 2017; Fraser 1992; Hall 1995; Hefner 1998). The concept's importance lies in the recognition that an effective and sustainable democracy requires not only formal institutions like elections, party structures, and a separation of powers but public spaces where political actors come together to forge some measure of agreement on shared values and goals (Calhoun 1992; Hefner 2000).[1]

Like Muslim society itself, the Muslim public sphere in Indonesia is today a rather crowded and contested place. However, at its organizational center sit the

two largest Muslim social welfare organizations in the world, the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Today both organizations face growing challenges from exclusivist Islamists and an eclectic array of celebrity preachers and social media influencers. More generally "[t]he high-brow *ulama* (those who have a strong background in Islamic studies) have been contested by the low-brow (those with minimalist knowledge on Islam) but populist *ulama* and preachers" (Saat and Burhani 2020b:4; see Chapters 2 and 5). Notwithstanding these challenges, these two associational behemoths still undergird a good portion of the organizational infrastructure for Muslim society as a whole. They and the independent intelligentsia to which they are linked also underlie much that is most distinctive about Muslim thought, education, and ethics in Indonesia. The fact that both organizations today are being challenged by new Islamist currents, commercializing trends in the media and popular culture (Hoesterey 2015; Rakhmani 2016; Weintraub 2011), and transnational movements requires us not to put aside any consideration of these organizations but to situate them in relation to a broader and fiercely agonistic social field.

There is another reason for adopting a dispersive and agonistic approach when examining these two Muslim associations and the Muslim public sphere in which they operate. For reasons that will be discussed further in Chapters 2 and 3, both NU and Muhammadiyah have a significant measure of internal ideological diversity. As van Bruinessen has noted, for example, "within the NU there have long been many who were inclined to populism" and who took exception to "the pluralism and tolerance of which many young NU activists are proud" (van Bruinessen 2021:16; see also Feillard 1995; Madinier 2015). No less important, the leadership of these two associations is not best characterized as "liberal" or (least of all) "secular" in the sense that these terms have come to be understood in Western circles since the late 1960s (Burhani 2013b, 2013c; Hefner 2018). In general, in fact, the ideological and normative contestations taking place in Muslim Indonesia today do not neatly conform to the Western-derived binaries of left versus right or secular liberal versus religious conservative.

The social composition and ideological orientation of the membership of mainline Muslim associations like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama illustrate just why such categorizations are Western-centric and simplistic. Both mass organizations have theologically traditionalist and/or "anti-liberal" as well as centrist and progressive wings. Both also have significant regional variation with branch offices in provinces like West Java and South Sulawesi often distancing themselves from the pluralist appeals of the national executive (see Burhani 2013b, 2021; Hasyim 2021; Iqbal 2021; van Bruinessen 2021). Further muddying any liberal waters is the fact that the national leadership of both associations lent their support to the campaign of anti-communist killings that occurred in the months following a failed left-wing officers' coup in Jakarta on the night of September 30, 1965, which the armed forces leadership blamed on the Communist Party (see Chapter 2, and Cribb 1990; Robinson 2018). To this day, some of the elite in these

organizations, including the younger brother of former President Abdurrahman Wahid, Solahuddin Wahid (Feillard and Madinier 2006:201), remain fiercely anti-communist and, more generally, suspicious of values and movements identified as liberal or progressive (see Bourchier 2019; Hadiz 2019).

Notwithstanding these organizations' internal diversity, by the late 1980s a new and democratic-minded leadership had emerged in both, and on key political questions it eventually assumed a dominant role. The new leadership committed itself not to Western-style "liberalism" but to the idea that constitutional democracy and an Indonesian variety of multireligious nationalism are compatible with Islam (Chapters 2 and 5). Responding to the growth of transnational Islamists of Salafist and/or Muslim Brotherhood inspiration, public intellectuals in both of these organizations and independent Muslim NGOs also began to speak of the importance and authenticity of Indonesian expressions of Islamic culture and to call for the "indigenization" of (*pribumisasi*) of Islamic social styles. In the 2000s, the NU leadership in particular began to emphasize the concept of *Islam Nusantara* or (loosely translated) "archipelagic" Islam (Chapter 7; see also Burhani 2018). Muhammadiyah leaders spoke of *Islam berkemajuan*, "progress-oriented Islam." Both leaderships used these and other appeals to call for their followers to rally for democracy and multireligious citizenship. They also used their appeals to push back against the small but growing number of born-again Muslim youths who had come to believe that Islamist and/or Salafist styles of Islamic observance are more authentically Islamic than those Indonesian (Abdullah 2020; Saat and Burhani 2020b).

Under the reform-minded direction of Said Aqil Siradj (b. 1953) and Yahya Cholil Staquf (b. 1966), the leadership of Nahdlatul Ulama has in recent years taken these pluralist initiatives even further. In particular, NU leaders have called for a far-reaching transformation of Islamic legal and ethical traditions, particularly with regard to Muslim relations with non-Muslims. One telling index of their efforts is that the leaders have appealed to their fellow Muslims to ban the use of the term "unbeliever" (Ind., *kafir*) when referring to fellow citizens of non-Muslim faith. No less boldly, they have also called for a far-reaching reform of the Islamic legal traditions through which Muslims in Indonesia and other lands understand and practice citizenship and national belonging (Chapter 7; Staquf 2019; cf. Burhani 2019; M. Ali 2019).

Beyond Left and Right

A key premise of the present book, then, is that we risk misunderstanding the normative contention taking place in Muslim-majority countries like Indonesia when we characterize it in terms of a single rationality or regulatory logic or when we frame it within the Western binaries of left and right rather than in relation to the more complex cultural contexts out of which it has emerged (see Chapters 2 and 4). On matters of state-society-religious relations, most Indonesian Muslim

leaders, and, to judge by survey data (see Chapters 2, 5, and 7), most of the Muslim public, oppose proposals to transform Indonesia into an "Islamic state." But most also regard religion in general and Muslim politics in particular in decidedly non-secularist ways, ones inconsistent with key features of contemporary Anglo-American liberalism. Above all, most Indonesian Muslims, democrat, and Islamist, regard religion as a public good that has an important role to play in society and politics (see also Künkler and Shankar 2018; Kuru 2009, 2019a). However, rather than insisting that just one religious tradition should play the dominant role in public life, most Muslim and non-Muslim Indonesians subscribe to the idea that all of Indonesia's major religious communities have a right to play a role in the country's democratic public sphere (Wisdom 2022).

In keeping with these latter convictions, most in the Muslim public call for not a high wall of separation between religion and state but for the state to promote religious learning and values in schools and public life generally. In the political scientist Jeremy Menchik's apt phrase, the political culture endorsed by most Indonesian Muslims is less a species of secular liberalism than it is a "godly nationalism" (Menchik 2014; see Chapter 3). The latter is a variety of state policy and "imagined community bound by a common, orthodox theism and mobilized through the state in cooperation with religious organizations in society" (Menchik 2014:594). One would want to quickly add here that, notwithstanding Benedict Anderson's (1983a) assertively secularist assumptions on the matter, nationalisms inflected by religious imaginings are neither unique to Indonesia nor particularly rare; in fact, they remain one of the more widespread of regimes for religious governance in the modern world (see Chapter 3; Fox 2012, 2008; Künkler and Shankar 2018; Kuru 2009; Monsma and Soper 1997). However, just *what* varieties of "godliness" should benefit from state promotion, and what ethical values should be prioritized in each religion's observance, are matters on which Indonesians, Muslim and non-Muslim, disagree (Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 7).

This agonistic plurality has remained a trademark of social and political developments over the full course of Indonesia's *Reformasi* era. Muslim actors and organizations played a central role in the movement that propelled Indonesia's return to electoral democracy in 1998–9 (Aspinall 2005a; Assyaukanie 2009; Hefner 2000; Machmudi 2006; Rinaldo 2013). A small minority resembled liberal democrats in the Anglo-American sense of those terms, in that they were committed to an expansion of individual freedoms, a separation of powers, and a market-liberal variety of capitalist development. However, a far greater number were democrats in a non-Atlantic liberal sense of the term, in that they sought to balance democratic constitutionalism, a separation of powers, and individual rights with the creation of religious public goods and a religiously encumbered citizenry. In this sense, they bore a closer resemblance to the non-Atlantic liberal varieties of democracy once found in Western democracies of a broadly consociational variety like the Netherlands and Belgium in the late nineteenth century (Monsma and Soper 1997; Zijderveld 1998; see Hefner 2000:13)

In book that I published a generation ago (Hefner 2000), I pointed out that, whether in the 1950s or the post-Suharto *Reformasi* era today, even the most boldly democratic currents in Indonesian Muslim society are not "liberal," in the Atlantic liberal sense favored by political theorists in Great Britain and the United States. I suggested that the main current among Indonesia's Muslim democrats might be more aptly described as "religious-democratic" or "civic pluralist" rather than liberal (see also Madinier 2015). In a recent dissertation, the American political ethicist, Kyle Wisdom, has proposed another variation on this phrasing. He describes the vision at the heart of Indonesia's political ethics as a species of "civil religious pluralism." Rather than barring religion from public life, as assertive secularists would, or officializing one tradition as the exclusive religion of state, as theocratic models propose, Indonesia's tradition of civil religious pluralism "invites multiple religious traditions into public dialogue" (2022:29). It does so with the aim of allowing the state to "promote and create conditions for multiple religious traditions to present themselves and inform public space" (Wisdom 2022:68).

Whatever their differences, these characterizations of Indonesia's public ethical traditions as religious democrat rather than secular liberal are helpful, I have suggested, because they make clear that democracy comes in varieties other than those of a secular liberal or Anglo-American sort (see also Hefner 1990). As the Indian-born and U.K.-based political philosopher Bhiku Parekh has noted, Atlantic liberalism in its legal and philosophical forms "defines the individual in austere and minimalist terms . . . as an essentially self-contained and solitary being" (Parekh 1991:189). As both Michael Sandel (1984) and Charles Taylor (1992, 2004) have similarly emphasized, the paramount social value for such an actor is assumed to be individual freedom or autonomy. In striking contrast, most currents of political thought in Indonesia understand the individual and citizenship in a morally encumbered and richly relational manner. They balance individual rights and the ethical "care of the self" (Foucault 1994:88) with the care of the social, including the specifically *religious* care seen as necessary for human flourishing and the public good (Chapter 3; Hashas 2021). In these and other regards, most Muslim democrats here in Indonesia reject what Ahmet Kuru (2009) has aptly described as "assertive secularism," which is to say, the doctrine that would require "the state to . . . exclude religion from the public sphere and confine it to the private domain" (Kuru 2009:11; see also Casanova 1994).

In economic matters too, most of Indonesia's Muslim democrats conform rather imperfectly to received models of economic liberalism dominant today in the United States and Great Britain. Both in the heyday of parliamentary politics in the 1950s and at the peak of Muslim democratic activism in the early 2000s, most Muslim activists promoted economic ideals that blended a commitment to markets and private property rights with welfarist values of a Muslim socialist and/or communitarian nature (Hefner 2000:72). Prior to the regime transition of 1965–6, "few spokesmen of any political tendency would have failed to declare themselves both democrats and socialist" (Feith and Castles 1970:227). Still today many Muslim

democrats and even mainstream Islamists hold strikingly hybridic views on matters of capitalism and socialism (Hadiz 2016:159–72; Kailani 2021; Koning and Njoto-Feillard 2017; for global comparisons, see Haenni 2005; Tripp 2006:6–12). Many favor "a mixed economy based on cooperatives . . . partially exposed to market forces" (Madinier 2015:119).

In these and other regards, the place of religion, democracy, and citizenship in Indonesia is, as Etienne Balibar has observed with regard to modern ideals of inclusive citizenship everywhere, an "unfinished" entity still very much "in the making" (Balibar 2001:211; cf. Clarke et al. 2014:11; Van Klinken and Berenschot 2018). In this book I aim to shed light on the coevolution of religion and citizen belonging in this country, including how developments in both spheres influence gender and women's roles. My aim in doing so is to move beyond the Western liberal-conservative binary so as to attend more carefully to the agonistic plurality of discourses, practices, and social movements influencing social recognition and citizen belonging in this culturally rich and deeply important Asian nation.

Varieties of Muslim Politics

As background to the discussion of Islam and plurality in the chapters that follow, it is important to clarify one final terminological matter. This has to do with the category of "Islamism." Although since 1948 Indonesia has had a small extremist fringe willing to use violence to achieve its goal of establishing an Islamic state (Formichi 2012; IPAC 2014; Jamhari and Jahroni 2004; Madinier 2015), the great majority of what in this book I describe as exclusivist Islamists are neither violent, anti-systemic, nor tactically radical. The al-Qa'eda-oriented extremists who carried out the Bali bombings that killed more than 200 people in October 2002 (Chapter 4) are a clear exception to this generalization. But these al-Qa'eda supporters were roundly denounced not just by mainline Muslim organizations but by the great majority of Indonesia's Islamists.

As the chapters that follow will make clear, the small network of extremist Islamists in Indonesia, like those associated with the Islamist militias that proliferated in the early *Reformasi* period (Chapter 4), is a minority in the larger Muslim community in Indonesia – and a minority even among the country's Islamists. As other studies of Muslim politics in Indonesia have emphasized (Bourchier 2019; Bubalo, Fealy, and Mason 2008; Chaplin 2021; Hadiz 2016; Hilmy 2010), most Islamist organizations have experienced dramatic ideological shifts over the course of the *Reformasi* era. Although hardline groups like the Indonesian Council of Mujahidin (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* [MMI]; see Chapter 4) remain staunchly opposed to electoral democracy, women's leadership, and civic equality for non-Muslims, support for this and like-minded organizations has plummeted since the early 2000s (Chapter 4). In striking contrast with the MMI, Islamist organizations that have committed themselves to working within Indonesia's democratic and nationalist framework, like the Prosperous Justice Party (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*

[PKS]) and the neo-Salafist Wahdah Islamiyah (Chaplin 2018, 2021; Chernov Hwang 2009), have won greater (if still minority) public support. However, even while working within Indonesia's nationalist and democratic framework, these Islamist groupings have differed from their inclusivist rivals by their promotion of a "differentiated citizenship" (Holston 2011; Smith 2012) premised on Muslim supremacism rather than equality across religious communities (Chapters 3, 4, and 7).

The chapters in this book, then, explore citizen belonging from the perspective of the contention taking place among different currents of Muslim politics and ethics across Indonesia today. Not all Muslims have been swept up in the contention. In fact, many "ordinary Muslims" (Peletz 1997) or practitioners of "popular Islam" (Weintraub 2011; see also Gaffney 1992) practice their religion in a manner that gives little heed to national politics. Muslim believers of this sort favor what I call "proximate" or near-at-hand concerns like those of simple worship or "halal consumerism" over political or structural concerns (Heryanto 2011; Hoesterey 2017; Rakhmani 2016).

Among that portion of the Muslim public that does attend to formal politics, however, we can speak of two broad camps, each internally diverse. Drawing on the scholarship of Saeed (2008; Akbar and Saeed 2022), Husein (2005), and Moosa (2001), I refer to the two main groupings within Indonesia's Muslim politics as "Muslim inclusivists" and "exclusivists." The great majority of inclusivists are not Western-style secular liberals. They are instead committed to a variety of "theistic democracy" (Madinier 2015:336) that affirms not only that Islam is compatible with constitutional democracy and multireligious citizenship but that religious values and commitments are necessary for the full realization of civic equality and social justice. They also tend to adopt an approach to Islamic ethical and legal reasoning that favors contextualism and comprehensiveness over narrow textual particularism. In the political sphere, these Muslim inclusivists have sought not to implement an Indonesian version of Anglo-American liberalism but to build on and strengthen Indonesia's long-standing tradition of Pancasila pluralism with its core commitment to a religiously based but multireligious public ethics (Fachrudin 2018; Picard 2011; Wahyudi 2018). To extend and reinforce these traditions, the inclusivists have also advocated reforms in Muslim politics, ethics, and education (Chapters 2, 5, and 7).

Indonesia's smaller but well-organized Islamist community is itself internally varied, indeed to a far greater degree than its counterparts in, for example, Egypt, Iraq, or Jordan (Adely 2012; Bayat 2013; Scott 2010; Wiktorowicz 2004; see also Hadiz 2016). I refer to this community as exclusivist first and foremost because it declines to extend full and equal social recognition to non-Muslims. No less important, this community is exclusivist in that it claims that, on certain critical matters, there is and can be but one understanding of Islamic ethics and law (see Chapters 2 and 4).

It is vitally important to emphasize, however, that as used in this book the terms "Islamist" and "exclusivist" should *not* be understood as code for a variety of Muslim politics linked to violence, extremism, or even invariant opposition to democracy and citizenship. As both the Egyptian scholar Hasan Hanafi (1935–2021; see Hanafi 2010) and the American anthropologist Daniel Varisco (2010) have argued, the term "Islamist" has an Orientalist genealogy and is still today associated in Western media with portrayals of Islam as a "religion of violence" (Martin and Barzegar 2010:3). In an important book, the anthropologist Mahmood Mamdani (2005) has similarly demonstrated that after the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the term "Islamist" came to be associated in Western policy circles with a simplistic differentiation between "good Muslims" and "bad Muslims."

Notwithstanding these reductive usages, in Islamic studies, sociology, anthropology, and comparative politics, today the term "Islamist" is still widely used and without any assumption that its trademark is violence or extremism. More important for the present book's purposes, Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia make regular use of the term and do so without assuming that Islamism is by its nature monolithic or violent. As the American political scientist Donald Emmerson (2010) remarked several years ago, there is nothing in the least oxymoronic to the notion of a "democratic Islamism" (see also Chernov Hwang 2009; Hilmy 2010:6; Rakhmani 2016). In fact, for most of the 1950s, the country's largest Muslim political party of a broadly Islamist sort, known as Masyumi, sought to reconcile democracy with Islamist ethical projects (see also Boland 1982; Madinier 2015; Fealy and Platzdasch 2005; Samson 1971).

If, as this book suggests, Islamism is in fact neither a single movement nor necessarily un-democratic in its aspirations, what if anything unites the term's varied applications? In an overview of the varieties of Muslim politics in the early post 9/11 era, the political scientist Graham Fuller provided a helpful if still preliminary characterization of Islamism:

> [A]n Islamist is one who believes that Islam as a body of faith has something important to say about how politics and society should be ordered in the contemporary Muslim world and who seeks to implement this idea in some fashion.
> *(Fuller 2003:xi)*

In their introduction to the debate about Islamism in the public sphere, Martin and Barzegar have similarly observed that what unites Islamist movements is that they "advocate the search for more purely Islamic solution (however ambiguous this may be) to the political, economic, and cultural stresses of contemporary life" (Martin and Barzegar 2010:2). Often times the quest is justified with reference to the claim that Islam is *din wa dawla*, which is to say, both "religion and state," in a manner that allows no separation of religious and state authority (Hefner 2000:11; Lapidus 1996).

Emphasizing as they do Islamists' totalizing way of *knowing and practicing* Islam, all of these characterizations are, in my view, headed in a helpful theoretical direction. In particular, all correctly underscore that what Islamist movements have in common is *not* any single political tactic (least of all one involving violence or rejecting democracy) but a way of knowing and practicing Islam in an all-encompassing and anti-pluralist manner. They are anti-pluralist in the sense that they regard Muslim politics and ethics as a more or less totalizing and singular rather than heterogeneous entity. Drawing on the scholarship of Peter Mandaville and others, then, in this book I use the term "Islamism" to refer to

> forms of political theory and practice that have as their goal the establishment of an Islamic political order in the sense of a state whose governmental principles, institutions, and legal system derive directly from the *shari'ah* . . . . [R]eligion is . . . viewed as a holistic, totalizing system whose prescriptions permeate every aspect of daily life.
>
> *(Mandaville 2014:74; see also Hilmy 2010:6)*

In other words, what is common to all varieties of Islamism is the conviction that Islam provides a more or less uniform and encompassing *blueprint* for the organization of state, society, and human subjectivity. In most instances the blueprint is assumed to be derived from shariah traditions themselves assumed to be God-given and therefore unchanging (see Chapters 4 and 7). It is important to emphasize that, notwithstanding claims to the contrary, this view of Islam and politics represents a rupture not merely with efforts by Muslim democrats to bring Islamic learning into dialogue with the sciences of the world but with the capacious traditions of knowledge at the heart of Islamic learning and ethics since its classical age (Chapter 3; Ahmed 2016; Khan 2019; Kuru 2019a; Zubaida 2003).

Against this broader theoretical backdrop, it is also important to recognize that in any national setting, Islamism displays not just distinctive normative trademarks but context-specific carryovers from a society's class structure and political history. Here in Indonesia, for example, during the final years of the early independence era (1959–65), parties of a broadly Islamist orientation (like the modernist-dominated Masyumi; see Madinier 2015) that had proudly joined with secular nationalists, socialists, and Marxists in the struggle for national independence (1945–9) were drawn into a bitter, zero-sum competition with some of these same groups (Chapter 2; Fogg 2020). The discord was exacerbated by the fact that, at the end of the 1950s, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) had surged to become the largest of the country's political parties, and its rivalry with the Indonesian army and Muslim mass organizations polarized national politics (Feith 1963; Mortimer 1974; Roosa 2006). By 1959, Indonesia's once vibrant constitutional democracy had given way to a Sukarno-forged and authoritarian "Guided Democracy." From 1959 to 1965, Sukarno removed most of the guardrails that had earlier protected the country's democratic system; his Guided Democracy also shifted power away from

the parliament to the presidency (Lev 1966). At the same time that Sukarno veered to the authoritarian left, the Indonesian armed forces continued its transformation into "a politically powerful and conservative army, with a strong stake in the status quo" (Robinson 2018:295; Crouch 1978). A decade of anti-communist mobilizations convinced the army leadership and "some Muslims that the PKI represented a threat to the nation" (Robinson 2018:292). As noted earlier, this anti-communist legacy has had an enduring influence on all varieties of Islamism as well as on mainline Muslim currents in Indonesian society.

As Hadiz and Madinier have argued (Hadiz 2016, 2018; Madinier 2015), the social base of Islamism in contemporary Indonesia also reflects not just these political legacies but the country's class structure. Indonesia once had a large and energetic Muslim middle class, based primarily on market trade and commercial agriculture (see Geertz 1965; Hefner 1990). The circumstances of this Muslim bourgeoisie declined precipitously, however, in the early independence (1945–65) and New Order (1966–8) periods. In the late 1950s, President Sukarno's ultra-nationalistic policies sent the economy into a tailspin, taking the assets of the surviving Muslim middle class down with it. During the New Order period (1966–98), Suharto and his allies extended business favors more consistently to their cronies and Chinese Indonesian conglomerates than they did Muslim business groupings (Chapter 2; Hadiz 2016; McVey 1992; Sidel 2006:25). The fact that the Suharto regime did not give the Muslim middle class a significant stake in this new capitalist order ensured that to this day debates over Islamic ethics, law, and citizenship have been colored by not just religious concerns but Indonesia's ethnically stratified class structure. In this as in other examples, as Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz (2019:891) have argued, "where the state and market have failed to address social injustices, more illiberal models have emerged, some under the guises of populist discourses" – including those of an exclusivist Islamist sort (see also Kuru 2019a; Madinier 2015).

Maqasid and the Struggle for What Really Matters

The *Reformasi* era's contests for the hearts and minds of Muslim Indonesians, then, have been illustrative of a broad array of changes that have ensured that, to invoke Balibar again, practices of citizen belonging and public ethics here in Indonesia have remained contested, imperfect, and "in the making." However strong their political-economic linkages, these contentions have also had a richly ethical and epistemological dimension. By this I mean that they have compelled Muslim Indonesians to grapple with questions of how to know Islam, live as Indonesian citizens, and identify and prioritize "what really matters" (Kleinman 2007) in their private and public lives.

A generation ago, the anthropologist and scholar of Islam, Dale F. Eickelman, examined "the changing role of Islamic education, the concept of knowledge inherent in it, and the relation of its carriers to wider society" in the Muslim

Middle East (Eickelman 1985:xv). In this and later studies, Eickelman drew particular attention to the ways in which urbanization, nation-making, new media, and the rise of mass higher education pluralized patterns of religious learning and authority and ushered in a way of viewing Islam and religion generally as "systems to be distinguished from each other" (Eickelman 1992:647). Along with these trends came alternative ways of imagining "community and affinity" as well as the public good (see also Eickelman and Salvatore 2002). Here was a Muslim-world counterpart to the changes Charles Taylor has described in modern Western societies. At its heart lay a "new conception of the moral order of society," one that showed the influence of "the market economy, the public sphere, and the self-governing people" (Taylor 2004:2). In a recent cross-national study, Kuru has similarly demonstrated that developments like these in Muslim-majority countries have not been governed by timeless scriptural principles or an unchanging worldview but by understandings and practices that bear the imprint of discursive legacies *and* complex coalitions among "religious, political, intellectual, and economic classes" (Kuru 2019a:xiv). The changes Eickelman and Kuru have highlighted remind us that, just as with Western modernity, social and political change in Muslim-majority societies has distinctive epistemological and ethical constituents as well as those political-economic and material (Hefner 2005a). Such engagements also include struggles over the identities and moral orders that should be operative in public and private life and over just what social and material resources can and should be deployed for securing their place in society (Fukuyama 2018; Hadiz 2016; Kuru 2019a).

Changes similar to those Eickelman and Kuru have described have been taking place in Indonesia since the early years of the twentieth century. However, driven by trends in higher education, social media, urbanization, and capitalist development, these currents accelerated during the authoritarian New Order (1966–98) and its *Reformasi* era successor (May 1998 to today). Again, for many ordinary Muslims, a deepened preoccupation with Islamic values and knowledge has often had more to do with piety and lifestyles than it has state-level politics as such. As with the celebrity preacher AA Gymnastiar, the ambition of many preachers and believers is not politics or structural change but to combine "the enterprising and virtuous self" (Hoesterey 2017:13). For others, like the no less influential celebrity preacher, Ari Ginanjar, religious observance may include a grand-scheme dimension, involving "globalization as a divine challenge . . . met through intensification of Islamic faith" (Rudnyckyj 2010:1). But this initiative too often has less a state-centered focus than one that emphasizes that "at the root of Indonesia's political and economic crises is a moral crisis" (ibid.:8).

For exclusivist Islamists in hardline groups like the FPI (see Chapter 4), however, these same societal trends have inspired initiatives of a more systemic and state-oriented nature. Changes in Indonesian society and the broader global order reinforced these groups' conviction that the main threat facing Indonesia is a Western cultural and economic "invasion," an event referred to in an Indonesianized Arabic

as a *ghazwul fikri* (Ar., *al-ghazw al-fikri*). These developments also confirmed their belief that the only way to combat the threat is to rally the Muslim public to a unitary and Muslim supremacist model of politics, economics, and shariah law. As Bourchier has argued, developments like these also "gave illiberal political leaders from the nationalist and Islamic parties common cause with [hardline factions in] the military" (Bourchier 2019:718).

By contrast, for Muslim intellectuals and leaders of inclusivist and Muslim-democrat persuasion, recent developments have only reinforced their conviction that Islamic law and ethics are *not* simple or unchanging things, and what is required today is an Islamic ethics that carries over democratic and pluralist values into the practice of modern living and citizen belonging. The more jurisprudentially minded Muslim democrats emphasize that to develop such a religiously sanctioned democratic ethics requires a reformed understanding of God's guidance and laws in light of their "higher aims" or overarching "objectives" (*maqasid al-shariah*; see Chapter 7; Moosa 2001; Nassery, Ahmed, and Tatari 2018; Staquf 2021).

These concerns with what I call *maqasidization* or, in a more casual phrasing, religiously grounded "ethical prioritization" (see Chapters 2 and 7) are an important part of the story this book aims to tell. I use the terms *maqasid* ("aims," "purposes") and *maqasidization* (loosely, "prioritization" of Islam's ethical aims) in a deliberately non-technical and analogical rather than strict jurisprudential sense. As in the scholarship of the respected Indonesian poet, Sufi, and jurisconsult, Ahmad Mustofo Bisri (b. 1944), appeals for Muslims to orient themselves to Islam's higher aims are commonplace in modern Muslim discourse, but they can be made in idioms other than those of the law's *maqasid*. Bisri, for example, explores these issues in poetic verse as well as legal writings, appealing to his Muslim fellows to distinguish between Islam's higher "goals" (*ghaya*) and the "means" or instruments through which they are realized (*wasila*). Whatever the idiom employed, Muslim scholars and public intellectuals in Indonesia have gone considerably further than their counterparts in many Muslim-majority societies in grappling with the question of how to know Islam's *maqasid* priorities while also giving Islamic traditions the flexibility and empirical realism to respond to modern circumstances (Auda 2008; Emon 2018; Jackson 2006; Kamali 2008b).

As the Toronto-based scholar of Islamic law, Anver Emon (2018) has also noted, there has been a tendency in some academic discussions of Islamic law and the *maqasid* to limit attention to technical debates among narrow circles of Muslim legal scholars (Chapters 7 and 8). However, a key characteristic of the Islamic reformation taking place around the world in modern times has been the opening of debates like these to greatly expanded publics, including those involved in online social media (Eickelman and Salvatore 2002; cf. Abdullah and Osman 2018; Busbridge 2018). Many of the actors drawn into this contention have little knowledge of or patience for the complex methodologies of classical Islamic legal thought.

As here in Indonesia, then, an account of Muslims' effort to determine just what values and practices matter most in public life and citizen belonging cannot be limited to the analysis of debates among small circles of learned Muslim experts. This book aims to build on Emon's observation. It seeks in particular to move beyond discussions in scholarly circles to explore the broad interplay of social media and contentious politics in which Muslim Indonesians – "ordinary" (Peletz 1997) and "popular" (Weintraub 2011) as well as scholarly – come to know and debate Islam's ethical and societal priorities, not least with regard to questions of social recognition and citizen belonging.

One final point merits mention because it highlights the distinctiveness and importance of developments in contemporary Indonesia in comparison to other Muslim-majority nations. In an article on Islamic ethics published several years ago, the South African–born and University of Notre Dame–based scholar Ebrahim Moosa observed that in modern times there has been a tendency in Muslim legal circles around the world to adopt a "doctrinaire traditionalism" premised on a "static and idealistic notion of history." As a result, Moosa argued, "Contemporary experiences do not qualify to influence adaptation and change to the law or ethics" (Moosa 2005:241). Moosa recognized that, in a handful of countries, a small movement for "critical traditionalism" has emerged. Its central ambition is to "effect a new knowledge synthesis," one based on putting "traditional Muslim religious sciences in dialogical engagement with the modern social sciences and humanities." Moosa nonetheless concluded his thoughtful article with the rather doleful observation that "[c]ontemporary Muslim thinkers have yet to devise a satisfactory ethical theory in which the dialogic of transcendent norms and history are effectively demonstrated" (Moosa 2005:242).

Although this latter generalization may well describe educational and ethical trends in some Muslim-majority lands, it does not apply to contemporary Indonesia. Since the rise of both modernist and a reformed traditionalist education in the early decades of the twentieth century (Chapter 5), Muslim educators and intellectuals in this country have struggled to bring about just such "a new knowledge synthesis . . . in dialogical engagement with the modern social sciences and humanities" (ibid.:241). In a 2020 essay, the former rector of the State Islamic University in Yogyakarta, Amin Abdullah, gave voice to what is now the operating consensus in Muslim democrat educational circles. He explained that the "social sciences and the humanities are critical approaches that can prevent narrow-minded interpretations of Islam" (Abdullah 2020:22). The far-reaching curricular reforms implemented over the past thirty years in Indonesia's State Islamic university system have sought to incorporate just such approaches into the study of the Islamic sciences (Chapter 5). In so doing, they have established Islamic education in Indonesia as among the most boldly innovative in the world. They have also confirmed that however strong the "conservative turn" in some spheres, the agonistic plurality operative in Indonesian Muslim society has also spawned initiatives of great courage and intellectual breadth.

Book Chapters

It is with the aim of exploring the political forces and social imaginaries shaping rival varieties of social recognition and citizen belonging in Indonesia, then, that the present book has been written. Chapter 2 sets the stage for the book as a whole, situating struggles over cultural citizenship in *Reformasi* Indonesia in a global as well as an Indonesian historical context. The global context includes the crisis of citizenship in the contemporary (post-Arab Spring) Arab-Muslim world, the rise of right-wing populism and Christian nationalism in Western liberal democracies, and an upsurge in ethnic, racial, and religious majoritarianism across the global south. I bring in these latter "non-Muslim" examples so as to underscore that this book has been written against the backdrop of not problems unique to Indonesia or Muslim-majority societies but a crisis of democracy and citizen belonging that is both global and growing (see Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022; Croissant and Haynes 2021; Diamond 2021; Fukuyama 2018). Against this troubled backdrop, the comparative lessons Indonesia has to offer on living together in religious, ethical, and gendered difference take on even greater importance.

Chapter 3 highlights a feature of state-society-religion relations in Indonesia that also has parallels in other parts of the world and one that is vital for understanding the non-liberal but democratic varieties of religious freedom recognized in Indonesia today. The phenomenon is what I and others have described as "religionization" – the processes whereby an earlier and capacious plurality of traditions and practices understood (in some local idiom) as "religion" give way to a narrower, more standardized, and elite-authorized range of religious forms. This phenomenon of the narrowing and formalization of religion in modern societies is a familiar one, and the process is not by any means peculiar to Muslim-majority societies. In postcolonial settings, the process is often assumed to be modeled on modern Western Protestantism, centered on a "privatized" model of religion (Asad 2003). However, the Indonesian example reminds us that the assumption that religions in modern times have everywhere been reconfigured as *private and belief-based* rather than public and performative needs to be rethought. As Miryam Künkler and Shylashri Shankar have demonstrated (Künkler and Shankar 2018), the rise of the nation-state and modern forms of governance has in many countries led not to religion's privatization but to the public privileging of one or two favored religious communities over and above all others. This was the pattern, for example, in most of the nations of Western Europe in the nineteenth century: they did not so much exclude religions from the public sphere, as they privileged one or two traditions over all others (see also Cesari 2018; Fox 2008; Monsma and Soper 1997).

Chapter 3 argues that, here in Indonesia, modern developments have reshaped state-society-religion relations in a similarly differentiated and hierarchical manner. They have informed elite and popular understandings of religion and determined just which religious currents in society have come to be seen as integral to Indonesia's tradition of godly nationalism (Menchik 2016) and thus deserving of

state protections and societal toleration – and which are to be marginalized as "culture," "custom," or mere "belief." Not insignificantly, however, some of the loudest voices calling today for greater religious freedom and a rethinking of religionization strictures have come from the ranks of intellectuals associated with the civic inclusivist wings of the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, as well as graduates of the country's State Islamic University system.

Chapter 4 examines one of the darker but most consequential developments in religious politics during the early *Reformasi* period: the emergence of radical Islamist militias promoting an exclusivist and anti-democratic variety of Muslim ethics and shariah law. In the early 2000s, these vigilantes invoked the Islamic ethical principle of "commanding right and forbidding wrong" (Cook 2001) to mount attacks on cafes, liberal Muslims, Muslim feminists, and others deemed deviant from the Islamist norm. This confluence of events led many analysts to conclude that Indonesia's Muslim community was not as democratic-minded as once thought. Indeed, it was said (as discussed earlier), Muslim Indonesia was in the throes of a "conservative turn" (van Bruinessen 2013b).

This chapter reviews much of the evidence cited to describe the conservative turn. As Peletz (2020, 2022) has similarly observed with regard to Malaysia, however, the chapter also makes clear that the phenomena in question are by no means uniform or defined by a single regulatory logic, not least with regard to the rights of women or citizen belonging. The chapter addresses these issues through an in-depth examination of three of the most important Islamist militias in the early *Reformasi* period. It explores the political and ideological encumbrances each movement brought to its mobilizations and the ways in which these endowments were linked to different ways of knowing, promoting, and practicing Islam and citizen belonging. The chapter also examines how each movement was not merely ideologically driven but influenced by its ties to powerful patrons and coalitions. Notwithstanding these movements' claim that Islamic shariah is scripturally based and invariant, each militia's model of Islamic law and citizen belonging was strongly influenced by these coalitional alliances and the diverse political-economic interests they pursued. Some of these collaborations also offer striking illustrations of the phenomenon described by Bourchier and Hadiz: "the convergence of religious and nationalist conservatism to produce a new brand of religious nationalism" (Bourchier 2019:713; see Hadiz 2018). Although such collaborations have done little to improve the fortunes of exclusivist Islamist political parties in national elections, they *have* boosted the influence of Islamist ideals in the public sphere. But the movements have also spurred countervailing efforts by inclusivist Muslims in organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah to defend Indonesian traditions of multireligious belonging (Chapter 7).

As this example of ongoing contentions in Muslim society illustrates, a key theme of this book is that the religious and political fields in Indonesia today are not dominated by any single Muslim grouping or all-powerful "grand scheme" (Schielke 2010a). This agonistic plurality is nowhere more apparent than in the

all-important realm of Muslim education, where different Muslim currents have put in place varied institutional edifices for the production and reproduction of their respective models of Muslim ethics and citizen belonging. Chapter 5 explores the varieties of Islamic schooling in Indonesia and the role they play in shaping public understandings of democracy and citizenship. In the day-to-day operations of the country's 16,000 Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) and its 50,000 Islamic day schools (known in Indonesia as *madrasas*), mainstream Muslim organizations like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama still play a dominant role. Although schools associated with mainline organizations show some variation on matters of civic ethics and citizen belonging, the great majority share a commitment to the civic pluralist ideals of Indonesian nationhood, democracy, and multireligious citizenship.

Over the past thirty years, however, exclusivist Islamists have succeeded at establishing a beachhead in the Islamic educational sector. More worrying for Muslim democrats, exclusivist views have also taken hold among mainline educators who teach courses on Islam mandated for all Muslim students in the country's public schools (Chapter 5 and Syafruddin et al. 2018). As a survey of one thousand Muslim educators I conducted in 2006–7 revealed, most religion teachers continue to voice strong support for the principles of electoral democracy and Pancasila pluralism (Chapters 2 and 5). But their views do *not* include a comparable commitment to equal civil rights for women or non-Muslim minorities. Although some analysts have viewed this aspiration to differentiate citizenship as a product of the conservative turn of the early 2000s, my research and that of other scholars indicate that views like these have long enjoyed significant support in portions of the Muslim community, including segments of mainline organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah (Hefner 2000, 2011a; Feillard 1995; Madinier 2015). Indeed, the proponents of far-reaching reforms to Islamic ethics and law, including the current chair of Nahdlatul Ulama, KH Yahya Cholil Staquf, regularly speak out against such anti-pluralist sentiments, recognizing their continuing influence among their own rank and file (see Staquf 2021). Leaders like Staquf also emphasize that the long-term reform of such attitudes will be impossible without the far-reaching revision of Islamic jurisprudence (Chapter 7). Over the twenty years that I interacted with them, the late Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid made similar observations, readily acknowledging that their own inclusivist views on democracy and pluralism were not yet the dominant ones in Muslim society. This, too, is part of the Islamic legacy Muslim inclusivists are struggling to reform.

Chapter 6, on Muslim women and women's rights in Indonesia, digs deeper into this last point regarding contingencies and ambivalences in Muslim public ethics, now with regard to women and citizen belonging. The chapter explores the ways in which gender cultures in Muslim Indonesia have long been shaped not just by scripturally informed normativities but by values and practices carried over from Indonesia-specific traditions of kinship, sexuality, employment, and popular culture. This cross-fertilization explains in part why gender roles in general, and

women's roles in particular, have not been "liberal" in the late-modern Western sense but *have* provided Indonesian Muslim women with significant social agency. Women's roles have also differed in significant ways from those in the Muslim Middle East and South Asia.

The chapter also explores new normative imbrications with regard to women's roles. It provides a historical overview of the rise of the Muslim women's movement in Indonesia and its relationship to secular nationalism and non-Muslim feminisms. It examines the social genesis of the new wave of Muslim feminism that arose in *Reformasi* Indonesia and explores how it was that women graduates of the country's State Islamic University system came to play a central role in the movement. Gender relations of a more intimate nature have also been transformed in recent years by the popularization of "companionate" models of spousal engagement. These enjoin men to be more emotionally expressive and supportive in interactions with their partner (Smith-Hefner 2018, 2019). In these and other regards – and as has also been reported in neighboring Malaysia (Peletz 2020, 2022) – matters related to women and girls in recent years have *not* been consistently conservative in any patriarchally repressive sense of the term. Through a case study of Muslim women's efforts to reform the country's Compilation of Islamic Law on gender matters, however, the chapter also explores the structural limits of recent developments and, conversely, certain strategic advantages enjoyed by exclusivist Islamists.

Chapter 7 draws together the book's disparate threads on Muslim ethics and citizen belonging in Indonesia today through an overview of competing understandings and practices of Islamic ethics and law. It begins by examining the circumstances that, in the early 2000s, facilitated the proliferation of what came to be known as "regional shariah bylaws" (*peraturan daerah shariah, perda shariah*; Buehler 2016; Bush 2008). Many of these locally based regulations dealt with matters on which most Indonesians share a broad agreement, even across religious communities – such as the need to curb prostitution, limit alcohol consumption, and encourage children to study religion in school. Notwithstanding these areas of cross-confessional agreement, the bylaws have proved controversial because they disproportionately affect women and the poor, while ignoring many of the larger problems (including political cronyism and corruption) with which ordinary Indonesians are no less concerned. The regulations also reinforce the conviction among exclusivist Islamists that citizenship in Indonesia must be differentiated by religion in a manner that favors Muslims over non-Muslims (Hamid 2018; Mujani 2019).

Beyond the details of these examples, the idea that Muslims should bring their lives into conformity with Islamic and shariah values has been a powerful current in Indonesian society since the 1980s, and its influence only grew in the *Reformasi* era. However, the trend is by no means as simple as proponents of the conservative turn thesis imply. The culture shift has not created an operating consensus on *which* Islamic values are to be prioritized. It has also not put an end to debates over who

has the right to define such values or how non-Muslims are to be accommodated within any Islam-inflected ethics of citizen belonging.

In a manner illustrative once again of "the convergence of religious and nationalist conservatisms" (Bourchier 2019:713), the latter contentions have led some exclusivist Islamists to compensate for their meager progress in national elections by forging coalitions with elites and oligarchs otherwise indifferent to matters of Islamic observance (see also Feillard and Madinier 2006; Hadiz 2018). But these initiatives too have not gone unchallenged. They have prompted important segments of the leadership in Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, as well as in unaffiliated segments of the Muslim intelligentsia (Widiyanto 2013), to call for a far-reaching reformulation of Islamic legal and ethical traditions. As noted earlier, some in the national leadership of the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have proposed to authenticate and extend these ethical reforms by appealing to the "higher aims of the shariah" (*maqasid al-shariah*). These latter efforts build on the long-recognized precedent for *maqasid*-based reasoning in Muslim legal scholarship (Emon 2018). But these initiatives also go well beyond classical understandings by carrying over cosmopolitan values of democratic governance, universal human dignity, gender equality, and inclusive citizenship into the very heart of the shariah's reconceptualization (see Burhani 2018; Lohlker 2021; Staquf 2021). The book's conclusion steps back from this and other initiatives to reflect on the implications of the Indonesian example for Muslim politics and citizen belonging around the world today.

In sum, at this critical juncture in Indonesia's national development (Chapter 2), Muslim society is clearly characterized by a striking "plurality of evidently contradictory meanings in life," to borrow a phrase again from the late Shahab Ahmed (2016). The story I tell in the chapters that follow shows that public contentions over Islam, democracy, and citizenship are prompting many Muslim Indonesians to assess different ways of knowing and practicing "what really matters" in Islam and in Indonesian civic life. They do so nowhere more vigorously than with regard to matters of citizenship, public ethics, gender, and social recognition (see also Stokke 2017). Stated differently, my concern in the chapters that follow is with not just democracy and citizen belonging but what the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor (b. 1931) has referred to as "social imaginaries" and "recognition" respectively. The former reality refers to

> the ways in which people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.
>
> *(Taylor 2002:106)*

While describing Indonesian Muslim social imaginaries and the public spheres in which they are shaped, however, this book also examines the structural and

political-economic contingencies through which rival social imaginaries and practices of social recognition are produced and reproduced over time and the social changes and movements that make certain ethical imaginaries more broadly resonant than others (cf. Hadiz 2016; Kuru 2019a).

To say that this book is also concerned with Taylor's concept of recognition is another way of emphasizing that the quality of democracy, plurality, and citizenship in Indonesia today is not just dependent upon elections and state-centered politics but on the less formal but more pervasive processes of social *recognition* (Taylor 1992; Honneth 2001) operative in society. "Social recognition" refers to the social-psychological, ethical, and political practices through which actors evaluate, acknowledge, and otherwise engage their fellows in society. If citizenship in its official forms refers to an individual's relationship with a political community that conveys certain reciprocal rights and obligations (Isin 2008; van Klinken and Berenschot 2018), social recognition refers to the more general and less state-focused processes through which actors perceive, categorize, and engage their societal fellows. Actors then draw on those processes of recognition to understand and express their own identities, rights, and obligations in relation to those around them (Fukuyama 2018).[2]

Ideas on and debates over recognition have been a central feature of public life in Indonesia since the rise of the movement for Indonesian independence in the 1920s (Chapters 2, 3, 4; Madinier 2015). In the broader Muslim world, questions of how to recognize social fellows in a plural society have been a central concern of Muslim public ethics since the Prophet Muhammad formulated the Medina Charter shortly after his migration from Mecca to Yathrib (known subsequently as Medina) in 622 C.E. (Yildirim 2009). The charter extended rights of protection and autonomy to Jewish tribes as well as Muslims, including on matters of religious worship and social organization. Over the centuries that followed, Muslim jurists, theologians, rulers, and mystics devised additional ways for recognizing one's fellows in an Islamic manner, not all of them consistent with the Medina Charter (Emon 2012; Friedmann 2003). But the question of how to recognize one's fellow Muslims and non-Muslims remains at the heart of modern varieties of Muslim public ethics and is a prominent theme in debates across the Muslim world today (Emon 2012; Moosa 2001; Ramadan 2009).

These efforts and the contentious politics to which they have given rise tell us much about the changing meanings of Muslim politics and identity in Indonesia today. Over the long term, and especially in an age of global democratic regression (Croissant and Haynes 2021; Diamond 2021), the outcome of these trends will depend not just on the force of ideas but on "the relations between religious, political, intellectual, and economic classes" (Kuru 2019a:xiv; see also Hadiz 2016). In these and other regards, the Indonesian example offers important insights into the challenges of citizen belonging not just in Muslim-majority societies but in all nations of the world today.

Notes

1 In political theory circles, the idea of the public sphere was initially associated with the German sociologist Jurgen Habermas, author of the influential *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989, orig. 1962). Habermas's account has been rightly faulted for not recognizing that real-and-existing public spheres in Western Europe have always been class-stratified and gender-segregated in a manner as to exclude women, ethnoracial minorities, and non-elite males (Fraser 1992; Calhoun 1992; Warner 2002). No less serious, the "elite" public sphere was in fact always just one among several operatives in European societies. Like all societies, European societies have a variety of publics, some of which are organized as "counter-public" sites of alterity and even opposition to elite public spheres (Hirschkind 2006; Warner 2002). The discourse and values that predominate in any particular public sphere need not conform to the Enlightenment model of deliberative rationality in opposition to "tradition," market forces, or power. The communicative processes that take place in real and existing public spheres are often subject to admissions screenings, whereby certain actors are deemed qualified to speak while others are barred. No less serious, real-and-existing public spheres are vulnerable to and affected by commercial and/or commoditizing forces as well as coercion and domination. Inayah Rakhmani (2016) has demonstrated that, since the late 1990s, Indonesia's entertainment industry has played a major role in reshaping public-sphere representations of piety in a manner differentiated for audiences by gender, class, and professional aspirations. As Fox has also noted, such entanglements make problematic the image of the public sphere as a realm of "rational debate between individuals regarding both their respective interests and common goods" (Fox 2020:97). Such entanglements render equally problematic "Enlightenment narratives depicting the newly unfettered rise of reason from the shackles of tradition" (Cody 2011:43). In place of such idealizations, the present book emphasizes that real-and-existing public spheres "are irrevocably enmeshed in the social infrastructures of mass communication" (Cody 2011:48), including those that result from the "reifications of consumerist capitalism" (Cody 2011:45), as well as political and class hierarchies.

2 In Western political philosophy, the concept of recognition has roots in Hegel's notion of the "quest for recognition," but the issue has today moved well beyond this early philosophical framework. Hegel's achievement lay in his taking exception to the atomistic and introspective conceptions of the self developed in the work of Descartes and Kant, emphasizing instead that self-identity is a relational and dialogical process shaped by and dependent on the recognition of others. In more recent years, the concept of recognition has been explored further in relation to debates over multiculturalism and recognition in modern Western democracies (Fraser 2000; Honneth 1995, 2001; Kymlicka 1995; Taylor 1992). As in the works of Axel Honneth and Nancy Fraser, much of this new Western scholarship on recognition is of a prescriptive sort, challenging received liberal models of subjectivity, social justice, and human flourishing, and proposing a more intersubjective and dialogical alternative (see Zurn 2000). The approach to recognition deployed in this book builds on these precedents. However, rather than arguing that one variety of social recognition is better suited for human flourishing, my first aim is to examine the varied modes of recognition operative in different social spheres and assess their implications for broader trends with regard to citizenship and civic coexistence.

2

CITIZENSHIP AMIDST RESURGENCE

In 2012, a hard-working and blunt-talking Christian Chinese businessman-turned-politician, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (commonly known as "Ahok"), ran for and was elected to the deputy governorship of Jakarta. Joko Widodo ("Jokowi"), the future president of Indonesia (r., 2014–24), was elected governor. When, just two years later, Jokowi ran for and was elected Indonesia's president, Ahok was automatically elevated to the post of Jakarta governor. The expectation too was that in the gubernatorial elections scheduled for April 2017 he would contest the position on his own and likely win.

From the first days of his deputy governorship, Ahok was the target of fierce demonstrations by a loose alliance of anti-pluralist Islamists. The largest contingent of protestors operated under the leadership of Muhammad Rizieq bin Hussein Shihab (b. 1965), the leader of a hardline Islamist militia known as the FPI (see Chapter 4). From a simple sociological perspective, the protest was not entirely unexpected. The population of metropolitan Jakarta is 83% Muslim, and the city and the adjacent provinces of Banten and West Java have long been home to a well-organized Islamist minority. In the late 1940s and 1950s, a network of activists in this region's interior uplands had lent their support to the Darul Islam rebellion against the newly declared Republican government. The latter conflict had broken out at a time when the postwar Dutch administration was attempting to reoccupy its former colony (Formichi 2012; Madinier 2015:106–29; van Dijk 1981).

Complicating interreligious relations, from the late 1970s onward, West Java and Banten had also been regions targeted by Indonesian Christian missionaries for unusually assertive proselytization (Mujiburrahman 2006). As I was regularly told during visits to Jakarta and neighboring Banten each year in the 1990s, the mission outreach caused alarm in Muslim circles, even in nationalist-minded Muslim groupings like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. Although their

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-2

mission appeals won few converts among the native Sundanese, Javanese, and Betawi population, the initiative sparked the formation of militant anti-apostasy coalitions, including the well-known Islamic Reformist Movement (GARIS, *Gerakan Reformis Islam*).

In a cordial three-hour interview at his home in Bandung on January 12, 2008, the founder and executive director of the latter movement, H. Hernawan Dapet, told me that his organization had roots in the Masyumi political party of the late 1950s. He also explained that in the *Reformasi* era GARIS's primary aim had shifted away from party politics to combatting Christian missionary activities as well as doctrinal deviance in the Muslim community. Hernawan emphasized that he had no problem with local Christians exercising their right to worship. However, he regarded Christian proselytization in Muslim-majority areas as a violation of Indonesian traditions of religious freedom, which aim to balance individual rights with communal harmony (Chapter 3). Hernawan took particular exception to the fact that, in the aftermath of the 1965–6 killings of communists, Christian missionaries *had* managed to convert small numbers of residents, mostly from among recently arrived Sumatran and Javanese immigrants to the area. As a result of these and other legacies, Christian-Muslim tensions in this western corner of the island of Java are still today among the most highly charged in all of Indonesia (ICG 2010:5; Bamualim 2015). In light of this history, it actually seems remarkable that Ahok had ever been elected to office in 2012. The fact that he had been shown that notwithstanding the Muslim populace's reputation for piety, voters' priorities in national elections lay with matters of economic and social welfare.

Despite Governor Ahok's continuing popularity, Rizieq's FPI and Hernawan's GARIS had reinitiated their campaign against the governor in 2016, claiming that Islamic law forbids non-Muslims from exercising executive leadership over Muslims. The campaign continued for several months but failed to gain traction. Opinion polls in mid-2016 indicated that the favorability rating of the Christian Chinese governor still hovered around 75%. However, Governor Ahok had sparked grassroots resentments for reasons other than his ethnoreligious identity. Early on in his governorship, he had initiated urban renewal projects to address the capital's chronic problems with flooding and waste treatment. Although responding to serious environmental problems, his projects had displaced large numbers of urban poor. Ian Wilson, an Australian anthropologist, has observed,

> Ahok's program of neoliberal urban redevelopment and infrastructural improvement has been explicitly pitched to a middle class anxious to enjoy amenities and lifestyle comparable to Singapore or Seoul. His unwavering stance regarding the eviction of informal neighborhoods . . . has been popular with middle class constituents, in part due to the perception of a commitment to the rule of law, but also because they have been exempted from it.
>
> *(Wilson 2017)*

Notwithstanding controversies like these, the received wisdom in mid-2016 was that the Chinese Indonesian governor was the clear favorite to win the gubernatorial elections scheduled for April 2017. However, all this was to change in the aftermath of events on the afternoon of September 27, 2016 (Mietzner and Muhtadi 2018).

The September 27 meeting marked the unofficial launch of Ahok's gubernatorial campaign. As he addressed the assembled audience, Ahok made what one of his advisors later told me was intended as a light-hearted reference to al-Ma'ida, verse 51, in the Qur'an. The verse reads, "O ye who believe! take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he amongst you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them." The verse has long been the subject of contradictory exegeses by Muslim scholars. Some interpret it as counseling Muslims *never* to take Jews and Christians as allies or friends (see Wahyudi 2018). Other commentators insist that its cautionary message was intended to apply only to a particularly troubled moment in Medina politics during the life of the Prophet. Seemingly unaware of the hermeneutic minefield into which he had stumbled, Governor Ahok told the crowd, "Ladies and gentlemen, you have been deceived by those using the al-Ma'ida Verse." When one of Ahok's online detractors learned of his comments, he posted a redacted version of his remarks on the web, editing the governor's words as if to say, "Ladies and gentlemen, you have been deceived by Al-Ma'ida 51." The video soon went viral.

Caught off guard by the public response, on October 10, 2016, the governor apologized for his statement. But the legal complaint and police investigation against him moved forward. On October 11, 2016, the fatwa board of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (*Majelis Ulama Indonesia*, MUI) called for the state prosecutor to take legal action against Governor Ahok on grounds that he had defamed Islam – a serious crime under Indonesia's strict blasphemy laws (see Chapter 3). Over the next several weeks, the leadership of the FPI joined with GARIS and other militia groups to launch a newly energized round of protests against the governor, demanding state officials prosecute Ahok for religious defamation. The executive leadership of the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama criticized the governor for his remarks but discouraged their membership from joining the campaign. Many rank and file rallied to the cause nonetheless.

The first mass demonstration against Governor Ahok took place on November 4. It assembled 100,000–200,000 protestors, who marched in a noisy but festive manner from the capital's Istiqlal mosque to the presidential palace. Several prominent figures from NU and Muhammadiyah attended the event despite the leadership's appeal for their members not to participate. Among these leaders was Amien Rais, the former executive director of Muhammadiyah and Parliament Speaker. Rais was well known for having distanced himself from the inclusivist positions with which he had been associated in the 1999 elections (when while living in Yogyakarta I had regularly met with him), adopting increasingly majoritarian positions. In his

public statements on the Ahok controversy, Rais had referred to the Christian governor as a "the Chinese *kafir* [unbeliever, infidel]" (see Fealy 2016a, 2016b).

Several weeks later, on December 2, 2016, the anti-Ahok campaign staged another mass rally. This event assembled the largest number of Islamist-led protesters ever seen in the capital – bringing in some 500,000 demonstrators in what came to be known as the 212 Action (*Aksi 212*; see Pribadi and Zuhri 2017). This second rally was seen as a challenge not just to Governor Ahok but to his longtime friend and ally, President Jokowi. Later that morning of the demonstration, the president signaled what was to become his new strategy for neutralizing the challenge posed by the anti-Ahok mobilization. As the demonstrators paused for midday prayers, Jokowi surprised onlookers by crossing the street from the presidential palace to join the assembled worshippers. The president was accompanied by Vice President Jusuf Kalla; Minister of Police Tito Karnavian; and the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs General Wiranto. Although the president that day made no direct reference to the Ahok controversy, his presence at the demonstration and his loud declarations of *Allahu Akbar* (God is Great) were taken as signs that he now wished to be seen as sympathetic to the demonstrators' concerns. Political observers took the president's actions as a clear sign that he realized that he could no longer afford to defend the embattled governor.

In the aftermath of this second mobilization, efforts to redirect the campaign against the president slowed, but those against the Chinese Indonesian governor gained momentum. There was an additional demonstration on February 7, 2017, as well as a nonstop campaign against the governor in mosques (see Hamid 2018). Although Rizieq's FPI militia continued to supply most of the shock troops for the demonstrations, the campaign leadership was broadened with the inclusion of a middle-ranking scholar from the MUI, Bachtiar Nasir. A pleasant-mannered graduate of the Gontor Pesantren in Ponorogo, East Java, and the Islamic University of Medina, and chair of the alumni associations for both institutions, Nasir's earlier career as a television preacher added a measure of middle-class respectability to the anti-Ahok movement (IPAC 2018). Nasir and Rizieq were joined by a preacher of neo-Salafist orientation, Zaitun Rasmin. Rasmin was a founding scholar in the neo-Salafist pesantren network known as Wahdah Islamiyah (WI). WI had a reputation for puritanical ethics but otherwise preferred quiet cooperation with state officials over noisy protest. It threw itself into the anti-Ahok campaign nonetheless (see Chapter 4 and Chaplin 2018, 2021).

In the face of the growing mobilization against the Christian Chinese governor, mainstream leaders in NU and Muhammadiyah concluded it was pointless to try to defend the Christian Chinese governor through principled public argument. True to the epistemological populist pattern, the mobilization against the governor had made any further attempt to conduct public discussion in a civil and reasoned manner impossible. Few observers were also surprised, then, when the governor was defeated in the second round of the gubernatorial elections in April 2017. He lost to the charismatic former minister of education in the Jokowi cabinet, Anies

Baswedan. A man of intelligence and administrative skill, Baswedan, whom I have known since his days as a graduate student in the United States in the 1990s, openly courted the anti-Ahok vote and met on several occasions with FPI leaders. His campaign foregrounded his achievements as Minister of Education and his well-deserved reputation for combining piety with a roll-up-your-sleeves pragmatism (cf. Huda and Hazliansyah 2017). In his inaugural address as governor, Baswedan also made clear that he believed that the time had come for Muslims to be given a role in national life "proportionate" with their numbers in society. Although comments like these have been commonplace in Indonesian public life since the 1990s, the statement was seen by many observers as playing to anti-Chinese sentiment (see Bourchier 2019; Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019).

Meanwhile, the MUI-leveraged legal process against Ahok moved forward. A week after losing the gubernatorial election, Ahok was convicted of blasphemy in a Jakarta court and sentenced to two years imprisonment – a harsher sentence than the state prosecutor had requested. Realizing the political tide had turned against him, Ahok decided not to appeal his conviction and headed to prison. The straight-talking man who had once dreamed of becoming the country's first Chinese Indonesian president seemed to have concluded that his political career was at an end.

In the aftermath of Ahok's electoral defeat and blasphemy conviction, many foreign observers concluded that a critical juncture had been reached, one marked by the effective collapse of Indonesia's Pancasila tradition of multireligious citizenship. But events soon proved less decisive. The anti-Ahok campaign prompted a slow but steady counter-mobilization by the nationalist-minded wing of the political establishment and the increasingly anti-Islamist leadership of the Nahdlatul Ulama (see Chapters 4 and 7). The Jokowi administration also initiated a series of openly repressive measures against Rizieq. In January 2017, Rizieq was accused of defaming the Pancasila state ideology. In May of that same year, he was accused of sharing pornographic images and text messages with a prominent Muslim woman. He was charged under the articles of the 2006 Anti-Pornography Act, a law for which, ironically enough, he had campaigned a few years earlier. At the end of the month, Rizieq fled to Saudi Arabia. He remained in that country until November 10, 2020, when he returned to Indonesia to thousands of cheering supporters at Jakarta's international airport. A month later, on December 13, the preacher was arrested on charges that, by continuing to hold mass rallies, he had violated Indonesia's strict rules on public assembly during the COVID-19 pandemic. In May of 2021 he was sentenced to eight months in prison for violation of health quarantine protocols (Bakker 2021; see also Bakker and Karim 2022).

A number of Western analysts have concluded that the Jokowi government's campaign against the firebrand preacher was one more example of the Indonesian state's regression from liberal democratic ideals. The government tactics have been described as "fighting illiberalism with illiberalism" (Mietzner 2018) or deploying a state-supported variety of populist rhetoric against an Islamist populist opponent

(Hadiz 2018). In a private, off-the-record conversation I had with one of the president's advisors in January 2020, I was told that President Jokowi understood that his actions might be seen as "illiberal," but, as this advisor put it, "we are not politely chatting about household affairs here; we're in a struggle for the heart and soul of the nation." Whatever history's final judgment on the government's actions, the fact that well-heeled members of Indonesia's business class lent their support to different sides in this contest was illustrative of a growing polarization in Indonesian society (Facal 2020; Warburton 2019).

In keeping with this latter trend, during the presidential campaign of 2019, Jokowi's electoral rival, Prabowo Subianto, made support for Rizieq's return from exile a central issue in his campaign. However, I was told by a high-ranking aide that even in Prabowo circles some advisors counseled that support for the headstrong preacher was at odds with the business-friendly and professional image they wished to highlight. In early 2017 Prabowo had ignored appeals from Islamist supporters urging him to select another firebrand preacher, Abdul Somad Batubara, as his vice presidential running mate. Prabowo instead chose a good-looking and affable young businessman, Sandiago Salahuddin Uno (b. 1969).

As Chapter 4 will explore in further detail, the rise and (at least temporary) fall of Rizieq and his FPI militia were a dramatic period in what many observers regarded as a critical juncture in Indonesian traditions of national belonging and multireligious citizenship. In this chapter, I provide a background for these events by way of a theoretical and comparative reflection on citizenship, both in general and in relation to historical trends here in Indonesia. Later chapters will then apply the foundational concepts and histories I foreground here to other contemporary developments. My analysis begins with a discussion of the concepts of "differentiated" and "cultural citizenship" – notions vital for moving citizenship studies beyond a narrow focus on the state and formal rights to actual practices of social recognition and belonging in civil and political society (Hefner 2018; Holston 2008). I then examine the changing nature of citizenship contentions in Indonesia from dawn of the nationalist movement to today. I emphasize that developments in state and society have often exacerbated ethnic divides. In recent decades, however, citizenship contentions have also shown the imprint of a religion-based identity politics. As later chapters will make clear, these contentions help to explain just why in recent years religious identities have become key referents in a politics pitting the proponents of Indonesian traditions of multireligious citizenship, most of whom are Muslim, against Islamist advocates of Muslim supremacism (see also Bourchier 2019).

Citizenship: A Global Form Locally Remade

To come to terms with citizen realities like those operative in Indonesia, it's useful to situate the question of citizenship in comparative theoretical perspective. That perspective begins with a basic but important insight: that constitutions, elections,

and the operation of formal democracy are not sufficient to bring about an inclusive and egalitarian practice of citizen belonging. If, as is widely known, "[d]emocracy depends not just on formal political procedures but on social conditions" (Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022:349), this generalization applies all the more forcefully to citizen belonging. The latter has additional requirements, including "structures of integration, some cultural capacity for internal communication [and] some social solidarity of the people" (Calhoun 2007:153–4). None of these automatically emerge from elections or formal democracy.

Developments in Western liberal democracies since the late 1990s bear witness to the highly contingent nature of citizen realities. In many Western nations during those years, the confluence of mass immigration, alt-right populisms, and racialized violence shook public confidence in the once widely shared assumption that elections and democracy are sufficient to create an inclusive and egalitarian citizen belonging. In election campaigns themselves, voices calling for equality and inclusive citizenship came to be drowned out by conservative nationalist demands for the banning of new immigrants and for the coercive assimilation or marginalization of those already resident (Fitzi, Mackert, and Turner 2019; Gorski 2017; Joppke 2017; Modood 2007). To the dismay of proponents of civic equality and pluralism, in several Western countries, far-right populists succeeded in rallying a significant number of white working- and middle-class voters to their appeals (Brubaker 2019; Laclau 2005; Mackert and Turner 2017).

No less dismaying (from a civic pluralist perspective), in France and several other European countries, many of these anti-pluralist activists, though previously indifferent to matters of Christian tradition, devised an ostensibly religious strategy for advancing their exclusivist brand of citizen-making. In France, this involved invoking a hollowed-out image of the country's Catholic heritage as the basis of French national identity and then deploying that characterization to justify racialized discrimination against Muslims and other minorities (Beaman 2016; Brubaker 2019). Analysts have taken note of a similar instrumentalization of religious identities by the Christian nationalist movement in countries as varied as Brazil (Holston 2011) and the United States. The latter movement "dispenses with the subtle allusions to Christian scripture that have long tethered American exceptionalism to Christian ethics and political theology in favor of the not-so-subtle tropes of American popular culture" (Gorski 2017:344; Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022:8; Whitehead, Perry, and Baker 2018).

The rise of exclusionary identity politics within a formally democratic polity is of course not a phenomenon peculiar to the West or Christian-majority countries (see Ong 1996). In India, the ascendance of stridently majoritarian varieties of Hindu nationalism (*Hindutva*) in the 1990s and 2000s offered a family-resemblant counterpart to these Western Christian nationalisms. As the anthropologist Thomas Blom Hansen has observed, the anti-pluralist currents in the world's largest democracy were *not* the result of the Indian public turning its back on electoral politics. On the contrary, in fact, the majoritarian currents had "emerged out of the longest,

most sustained, and most successful trajectory of democracy anywhere in the post-colonial world" (Hansen 1999:5; Hansen 2019).

The Hindutva example underscores a lesson applicable well beyond India: rather than strengthening citizen equality and building national solidarity, electoral competition "very often gives birth to forces, desires, and imaginings of an authoritarian and anti-democratic nature" (Hansen 1999:6; see also Chatterji, Blom Hansen, and Jaffrelot 2019). As in India and Western democracies, these exclusionary currents often seek to build upon and redirect movements of ethnoreligious revival. Most of the latter mobilizations may aim not to strengthen ethno-religious values as such but to remake the ideals of nationhood and citizen belonging in a hierarchical and exclusive way. In so doing, these initiatives often damage what other believers regard as religion's deeper values and ethical priorities. In particular, rather than drawing religious values into the public sphere so that they might serve "as a protector of human rights and humanist values against the secular spheres" of the state and market (Casanova 1994:39), religion is coarsened and instrumentalized in identity politics projects of "us-vs.-them" exclusion (Beaman 2016; Brubaker 2019; Fukuyama 2018).

By the first decade of the new millennium, projects of citizen exclusivity like these were taking place in many nations of the world. These and a host of other regressive phenomena led many observers to conclude that the third wave of democracy and citizen rights that had begun in the early 1990s was not merely slowing but giving way in many regions to a significant decline in the quality of democracy and citizen belonging. In just this spirit, one of the most respected American analysts of global democracy, Larry Diamond, observed that, after the third wave of democratization in the early 1990s, "the democratic wave has been slowed by a powerful and authoritarian undertow, and the world has slipped into democratic recession" (Diamond 2015:142; see also Diamond 2021). In a sweeping analysis of global trends, Calhoun, Goankar, and Taylor have written similarly, "The wave of democratic transitions and consolidation that seemed so promising and spread so swiftly across the globe in the final quarter of the last century is now in serious disarray, troubled and turbulent" (Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022:285). In the once hopeful democracies of the Southeast Asian region, too, policy analysts offered no less sobering prognoses, concluding that, "[a]fter a long run of global good fortune, democracy has fallen on hard times" (Case 2011:360; see also Case 2017; Thompson 2015, 2021).

Not surprisingly in light of the complexity of the phenomena in question, analysts have offered different explanations for this downward slide in the quality of democracy and citizen belonging. In Indonesia and the broader Southeast Asian region, the causal factor most consistently cited to explain these trends has to do with a structural legacy widespread across the region: "the dominance of oligarchic elites and patronage politics" (Berenschot, Schulte Nordholt, and Bakker 2017:2; see also Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019; Kenny 2019). There can be little doubt that patron-clientelism and autocracy have had a deeply corrosive effect on the

quality of democracy in much of contemporary Southeast Asia as they have in the Arab Middle East (Kuru 2019a; Meijer and Butenschøn 2017). However, while these variables play a central role, the Indian and Western examples remind us that there are other influences as well, ones having to do with qualities of "membership and . . . the collective cohesion and capacity of the *demos*" and citizenry (Calhoun 2007:151). To state the matter differently, the widespread decline in the quality of democracy and citizenship has to do with not just the pervasiveness of patronage politics but changes in practices of recognition and belonging across classes, genders, and ethnoreligious communities (Hefner 1998; Ong 1996; Turner 1997, 2011).

To understand what this means and why these changes have taken place requires that we broaden and deepen our understanding of citizenship itself. Such a deepening begins with the recognition that, in its full sociological sense,

> [c]itizenship is not just a matter of formal legal status; it is a matter of *belonging*, which requires *recognition* by other members of the community. Community members participate in drawing the boundaries of citizenship and defining who is entitled to civil, political, and social rights by granting or withholding recognition.
>
> *(Nakano Glenn 2011:3)*

In light of these real-world contingencies, it is also not surprising that the practice of social citizenship often "differs from legal citizenship because of the lack of mesh between formal citizenship and the [actual] allocation of rights, benefits, and privileges" (Caglar 2015:638; cf. Clarke et al. 2014:14). One consequence of these differential embeddings is that citizenship in practice is as much defined by "those who are excluded from it" (Sassen 2008:65) as those who are seen as "within" (cf. Balibar 2001:125). In these and other respects, citizen-making involves the "co-construction of political margins and centre" (Clarke et al. 2014:33).

This latter fact has long been recognized in studies of citizenship in the modern West. As the historian Rogers M. Smith (1999, 2003) has shown, cultural citizenship in the United States was never exhaustively defined by constitutional clauses or Jeffersonian ideals alone (see also Walzer 1996). Its social construction instead involved national discourses of "people building" (Smith 2003) that privileged some social classes and ethnoreligious groupings while marginalizing others. In particular, from the late eighteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, the practice of citizenship in America extended full civic recognition only to those who happened to be Protestant, male, propertied, and racially white. From the late nineteenth century onward, a series of movements for civil rights challenged this exclusive legacy, and America's sociopolitical order gradually came to accommodate a broader array of citizen actors (Kuru 2009). However, as the recent resurgence of white Christian nationalism in the United States has shown, some of the legacy's more severe exclusions, not least with regard to African-Americans, Muslims, and other

ethnoreligious minorities, still today carry over into citizen-making contentions (Gorski 2017; Holston 2011; Whitehead, Perry, and Baker 2018).

The American example reminds us, then, that citizenship as socially constructed is never simply a matter of, to use T.H. Marshall's classic phrasing, a "status accorded to full members of a community . . . equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed" (1950:149). Other social realities, including those shaped by ethnicity, race, gender, class, and religion, carry over into cultural citizenship's inclusions and exclusions. With its restless populations, global economic flows, and new social media, our late modern age has only aggravated this tendency. In so doing, it has created "bundlings" (Sassen 2008) of ethics, law, and political community different from the "over-coherent, over-unified and excessively institutionalist" model of citizenship once thought the norm. In so doing, it has also made any simple isomorphism of society, nation, and egalitarian citizenship even less stable today than decades earlier (Caglar 2015:2; Ong 1996; Clarke et al. 2014:40).

A second and related insight on social citizenship follows from this first. The "traditions of knowledge" (Barth 1993) and narratives of people building (Smith 2003) that inform practices of citizen belonging in any national setting are never products of just one discursive tradition, be it Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, or a secular ideology like French republicanism or Anglo-American liberalism. As applied in real-world affairs, all traditions of public ethics and citizen belonging are normative and ideological amalgams. None in practice operates in a manner akin to what the British ethical philosopher Bernard Williams has referred to as an all-encompassing and seamlessly rationalized "morality system" (Williams 1985:174–95; cf. Keane 2016:17–18). As scholars of comparative law and ethics have long underscored, every society is to some degree ethically and legally plural, and the plurality gives rise to discord and contention (see Chapter 1; Deeb and Harb 2013; Engle Merry 1988; Laidlaw 2014; Schielke 2015). As Bowen (2003:26) has observed, to understand citizenship's evolving dynamics, then, one has to move beyond "studying the pluralism of legal systems to considering the dynamic relationship between legal and other normative orders."

Citizen Belonging, Differentiated

As the Ahok incident so dramatically illustrated, the ideals and practices shaping social citizenship here in Indonesia have been influenced by a host of intersecting variables. Certainly, as Kloos and Berenschot (2016:179) have argued in an important comparative study, in recent decades religious identities have come to play a particularly prominent role in citizenship contentions. Kloos and Berenschott rightly point out that "conceptions of citizenship in both Indonesia and Malaysia are developing in interaction with evolving attitudes toward Islam, Islamic texts and discourses regarding 'proper' Islamic behavior" (cf. Schielke 2010a, 2010b; Deeb and Harb 2013). As the authors also note, however, the causal interactions

flow in other directions as well, ensuring that what is understood to be at the heart of "Islam" shows carry-over influences from other social domains and recognition practices. In particular, popular ways of knowing and narrating Islam in these two countries show the imprint of ethnic divides (Liow 2009), European legal traditions (Peletz 2013, 2020), class hierarchies (Hadiz 2016; Hoesterey 2015; Rudnyckyj 2010), higher education (Lukens-Bull 2013), new social media (Rakhmani 2016:33–67; Slama 2010, 2017), and diverse practices of gender and sexuality (Boellstorf 2004, 2005; Peletz 2009, 2020; Robinson 2009; Smith-Hefner 2019; van Doorn-Harder 2006).

Although religious identities today play a central role in citizen-making in Indonesia, then, they never operate in a manner free of other social differentiations. As the 2016–17 campaign against Governor Ahok revealed, nowhere are such influences more striking than with regard to Chinese Indonesians. Although Indonesia is home to more than 700 ethnic groups, citizenship debates since the dawn of the nationalist movement in the early twentieth century have regularly struggled to come to terms with the divide separating Chinese Indonesians from other ethnic communities. Although highly varied in terms of language, dress, and social custom, most among the latter ethnic groups are referred to as *pribumi*, or "sons/daughters of the soil," as opposed to ethnic Chinese (as well as what the Dutch used to refer to as other "Asian nationals," including Arabs and Indians; see Chen 2022; Hoon 2006). Today the Chinese Indonesian proportion of the national population is officially put at only 0.86% of the population (Suryadinata 2008:7). That figure is significantly less than the estimated 2.0% of the population thought to have been of Chinese ancestry in 1900. However, the percentage of Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia today is widely assumed to be underreported, and the actual proportion of Chinese Indonesians in the population is likely twice the official figure. Whatever their precise numbers, the Chinese have long exercised powerful influence in Indonesia's economy, and the resulting class imbalance has fueled debates in nationalist circles as to where to situate Chinese Indonesians within the national imaginary.

There is a deeper historical background to the situation of Chinese in societies across the archipelago, one that shows just how much patterns of communal identity and social belonging have changed in modern times. People of Chinese ethnicity, most from southeastern China, played a pivotal role in the expansion of trade that underlay the archipelago's booming "Age of Commerce" from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century (Reid 1993:xiii). Some among these early arriving Chinese were Muslim (Madinier 2015), and many in pre-European times were close in custom and social bearing to the archipelago's native populations. One telling index of the earlier cultural commensality is the fact that several of the Muslim "saints" (*wali*) identified as having brought Islam to Java were of Chinese or part-Chinese ethnicity (Lombard 1990, II:42; Ricklefs 2006:17).

When Europeans sailed into the archipelago in the early sixteenth century, the bustling trade networks they encountered were not controlled by any single ethnic group or polity but were dispersed across the archipelago's social and territorial

expanse. The primary trade routes linked Muslim principalities in the east of the archipelago with more populous polities in the West. Although many of the region's mercantile ports had Muslim rulers, "[t]he Southeast Asian trading city was a pluralistic meeting-point of peoples from all over maritime Asia" (Reid 1993:66). Its residents and visitors included Arabs, Chinese, Indians, a few Christians, and even the occasional visiting delegation from Japan (Lombard 1990, II:31–48). The scale of economic exchange also facilitated extensive cultural borrowing across ethnic boundaries. Whether in matters of dress, dance, coinage, gong music, gender, or social etiquette, most of the societies in this insular ecumene drew on a Malayo-Indonesian as well as East Asian civilizational reservoir (see Florida 1995:105, 125; Lombard 1990; Peletz 2009).

There was a linguistic dimension to this archipelagic pattern of permeable ethnicity as well. Once a local language spoken on the west coast of Borneo, the Malay peninsula, and the east coast of Sumatra, from the sixteenth onward Malay became the "pre-eminent language of scholarship, commerce, diplomacy, and religion" (Collins 1996:23). Malay was spoken in almost all of the major trading ports of Southeast Asia, including by ethnic Chinese (see Reid 1988:233). Had ethnic relations in the archipelago been severely bounded, the trans-ethnic diffusion of this great lingua franca would not have taken place.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European colonialism and the expanding scale of Chinese immigration converged to undermine this long-established pattern, in a manner that hardened what had once been porous ethnoreligious divides. A spike in Chinese immigration to the archipelago, much of it to work in Western-controlled enterprises, reduced the incentives for Chinese to accommodate Malayo-Indonesian ways (Skinner 1950). In the Indies, Dutch policy deliberately reinforced this segregationist trend by promoting racial policies that "provided a milieu that discouraged assimilation" (Reid 1993:313; see also Stoler 1989). The Dutch also concluded that it was in their interest to collaborate with absolutist-minded native rulers, most notably in Java, to curb the activities of non-Chinese traders, whom native potentates saw as potential challengers to their rule. Regarded as unlikely to make common cause with disaffected natives, Chinese merchants were also given a large share of Dutch-managed concessions, including the tax "farms" at the heart of the European administration's lucrative opium trade (Rush 1990). By contrast, the once-thriving native (i.e., non-Chinese) commercial class, known as *orang kaya* (lit., "rich" or "powerful" person; see Lombard 1990, II:144–50; Reid 1993:114–231), had by the end of the nineteenth century fallen victim to the emerging colonial order.

During these same decades, Europeans began to imagine ethno-cultural differences as rooted in race. Consistent with the "scientific" racism increasingly influential in Europe (Stoler 1989), the Dutch crowned their policies on colonial plurality with the introduction of laws that made it a crime to appear in public "attired in any manner other than that of one's ethnic group" (Rush 1990:14; see also Gouda 1995:168–73). These and other policies only widened the gap between

the Chinese and native ethnic groups. In so doing, they laid the foundation for what was to become the late modern era's great divide between ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* "sons and daughters of the soil" (see Carey 1984:24; Chen 2022).

These and other developments in late colonial society also complicated debates among nationalists and Muslim reformists as to how to recognize locally resident Chinese, most of whom by this time were non-Muslim. One of the pioneers of Indonesia's nationalist movement, the Sarekat Islam (SI, Islamic Union) arose in Central Java in the 1910s at a time when tensions between Muslim and Chinese merchants were growing (Effendy 2003:16–19; Madinier 2015:36; 4; Shiraishi 1990:41–79). Just a few years after its establishment, the SI movement was shaken by ideological disputes between Muslim reformists, many linked to Muhammadiyah, and left-wing nationalists of a loosely Marxist orientation. Most of the latter activists were formally expelled from the organization at the SI's 1921 congress (Madinier 2015:37). They had antagonized their Muslim colleagues by taking steps in May 1920 to establish the PKI (McVey 1965:47).

At times the PKI leadership referred to Chinese merchants in a manner that associated them with the ills of capitalism (Suryadinata 19:11). The leadership also quarreled over the question of whether to recruit Chinese Indonesians to party associations (McVey 1965:226–7). Eventually, however, the PKI became one of the strongest supporters of equal rights for Chinese (Suryadinata 1992:36–8). Other nationalist associations continued to show greater hesitation on the Chinese question. One striking index of this attitude was that representatives from the Chinese community were conspicuous by their absence from the list of young nationalists invited to a Youth Congress organized in Batavia (today's Jakarta) in October 1928. The "Youth Pledge" (*Sumpah Pemuda*) recited at the Congress's closing expressed the attendees' commitment to the nationalist principles of one homeland, one nation, and one language. But the pledge left the status of the Chinese in the emerging national imaginary unresolved (Ricklefs 2008:224).

After independence, many of Indonesia's political parties, Muslim and secular nationalist, relaxed their policies on Chinese membership. Chinese who were locally born and Indonesian-speaking, known in Malay-Indonesian as *peranakan* (Suryadinata 1992), were officially welcomed into most parties of a nonreligious nature. In society at large, however, there was still considerable ambivalence with regard to Chinese, compounded now by anxieties as to their national loyalties after the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. For many politicians the solution seemed clear.

> Pribumi leaders, with the possible exception of those associated with the . . . Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), perceive total absorption of local Chinese into the Indonesian population as the solution to the Chinese policy. . . . Pluralism has been applied by pribumi Indonesian leaders to their fellow pribumis, but not to the Chinese minority.
>
> *(Suryadinata 1992:4; see also Hoon 2006)*

Consistent with this hardening of ethnic boundaries, state authorities in the new republic implemented increasingly discriminatory policies against resident Chinese. In the early 1950s, a small, corruption-plagued program of government licensing and export controls was introduced in an effort to reduce Chinese Indonesian commercial dominance (McVey 1992:11; Suryadinata 1992:130–2). The regulations brought an entire class of indigenous license-holders into existence, who "rented" their permits to Chinese businesspeople in silent deals known as Ali-Baba partnerships. In 1959, the Minister of Trade in the Sukarno cabinet, an official affiliated with Nahdlatul Ulama, issued a regulation banning foreign-born Chinese retailers from rural areas and requiring they transfer their business assets to Indonesian citizens (Robison 1982:86–8; Ricklefs 2008:303). Although in principle the regulation did not apply to Chinese who had acquired Indonesian citizenship, the initiative was symptomatic of the way in which economic nationalism could quickly take on anti-Chinese colorings. Policies with regard to Chinese cultural institutions showed a similar downward slide. The late 1940s had seen a great expansion of Chinese-medium schools across Indonesia. The expansion was so significant that some Chinese Indonesians, including Indonesian-born *peranakan*, actually relearned Chinese language and began to "re-Sinify." In 1957, however, the Minister of Defense banned Indonesian citizens from attending "alien" schools, thereby abolishing Chinese as the medium of instruction in schools serving Chinese (Suryadinata 1992:15).

Discriminatory practices like these continued in a more aggressive manner under Suharto's New Order regime (1966–98). During this period, wealthy Chinese businesspeople, commonly referred to as *cukong*, were tethered to Suharto and his business allies (Mackie 1992; Robison 1982:272; Ricklefs 2008:323). Some political observers saw a glimmer of hope in this otherwise predatory arrangement. In particular, as Ruth McVey had argued, during the first two decades of the New Order, the pace of capitalist development was such that it brought about a "melding of cultural as well as [economic] interests between Chinese and indigenous elites," not least with regard to "a common cosmopolitan, nouveau-riche consumer style" (McVey 1992:26).

True to the New Order regime's habits of coercive citizen-making, however, this melding in matters of consumption did not do away with discrimination in other social affairs. Earlier, in late 1965, the regime had closed the last remaining Chinese-medium schools. In 1974, the Suharto government imposed a ban on Chinese language instruction in *any* Indonesian school; publications and commercial signage in Chinese characters were also banned (Suryadinata 1992:158). In striking contrast to the Indonesian pattern, in nearby Malaysia, Chinese-medium schools flourished, as did the use of Chinese language and characters in public signs and writing (Tan 2000; Tang 2000). In these and other regards, "the New Order government ignored the internal diversity within the *pribumi* ethnicities . . . with the intent continuously to objectify and essentialize the Chinese as the foreign 'Other' and prevent them from being accepted fully as 'Indonesians'" (Hoon 2006:152).

Not all of the forces shaping popular recognition of Chinese Indonesians had to do with the New Order state. As we have seen, during the final two decades of Suharto's rule, Muslim society witnessed an unprecedented Islamic resurgence. One consequence of the pietistic turn was that the "melding of cultures" that McVey had imagined might make "the line between what is Chinese and what is indigenous . . . increasingly uncertain" (McVey 1992:20) slowed considerably as religious identities absorbed many of the tensions earlier associated with class and ethnicity (Hadiz 2016; Hamid 2018). The growing differentiation along ethno-religious lines was not merely categorical. The last four years of the New Order regime saw an alarming spike in communal violence. Many of the worst incidents targeted Christian and Chinese Indonesians (Bertrand 2004; Purdey 2006; Ricklefs 2008:381). The violence reached a crescendo in the period between May 4 and May 15, 1998, in the run-up to Suharto's resignation on May 21. During this time, Chinese businesses in several cities were ransacked and destroyed. Dozens of Chinese Indonesian women were targeted for sexual assault. The worst violence took place in Jakarta, Medan, and Surakarta, all cities with significant Chinese minorities (Purdey 2006:423). As Jemma Purdey has shown, the riots reminded Chinese Indonesians of "their vulnerability in Indonesia" and of the fact that the New Order's "assimilation project had . . . failed" (ibid.).

The early years of the *Reformasi* era saw the introduction of reforms intended to reverse these anti-Chinese legacies; the period also witnessed an unprecedented cultural revival in the Chinese community itself. In early June 1998, dozens of new Chinese civic associations were established; many held mass meetings for the purpose of devising a coordinated response to the May violence. On June 7, 1998, I attended one of the largest of these events in a convention hall in south Jakarta. Never in my years in Indonesia have I witnessed such a public outpouring of emotion and anger. Male and female attendees wept openly over the course of the three-hour meeting as they recalled their experiences during the May riots. This and other meetings marked the beginning of what was to become a broad-based revival of Chinese Indonesian culture on a scale previously unseen in independent Indonesia. New Chinese associations were organized at both the local and national levels. Chinese-language newspapers and online websites were organized. Dozens of private schools were established for the teaching of Mandarin and Chinese script – schools that, as I saw in Jakarta and Yogyakarta, often came to include a small but significant number of non-Chinese students (Hoon 2011).

Early on in his administration, President Habibie (r. 1998–9, d. 2019) condemned the violence of May 1998, including the sexual assaults that had targeted Chinese women. His successor, Abdurrahman Wahid, launched a series of even bolder reforms. In early 1999 he lifted the ban on Chinese-medium print materials (Hoon 2006). In early 2000 he authorized the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) to include Confucianism on the list of state-recognized religions (Suryadinata 2014). Notwithstanding these initiatives, many of the anti-Chinese tensions simmering in the late New Order period persisted. Their continuing influence was apparent

several years later, this time in the fierce rhetoric deployed against Governor Ahok and President Jokowi in the 2014 and 2019 elections. Those campaigns were the most partisan and polarizing of the entire *Reformasi* era. The three most widely repeated allegations directed against candidate Jokowi in both election campaigns were that "he is a bad Muslim . . . a puppet president, and . . . in the pocket of Chinese financiers known as *cukong*" (Tyson and Purnomo 2017:117; see also Chen 2022).

From Identity Politics to Small Town Wars

Other developments in Indonesian society from the final years of the New Order to the new *Reformasi* era showed that the crisis of national politics and citizen belonging so apparent in the Ahok affair was by no means limited to Chinese-*pribumi* relations. Although the New Order regime had redirected much of the flow of national wealth through Jakarta and New Order oligarchs, its programs nonetheless expanded economic and educational infrastructures across the full breadth of the archipelago. True to the New Order pattern, the economic expansion brought a new class of patrons and oligarchs into existence, even at the provincial and district levels. The growth also led to a no less dramatic increase in migration by nonresident ethnoreligious groups into territories once dominated by one or several long-resident ethnic groups (Duncan 2014; van Klinken 2007; Wilson 2008). Well before the formal decentralization of governance in 1999–2001, then, a significant decentralization of economic growth had begun. With it came a deepening pluralization of the ethnoreligious landscape in territories beyond Java (Bünte 2009).

Not surprisingly, the combination of migration, commercial expansion, and growing inequality fueled social tensions. In the final three years of Suharto's New Order regime (1995–8), Indonesia witnessed short but explosive outbreaks of ethnoreligious violence, especially in small towns and cities across Java, where about 40% of the nation's population lives (Varshney, Tadjoeddin, and Panggabean 2004). Most of these incidents occurred in the aftermath of minor scuffles involving male youths from different religious or ethnic communities (Bertrand 2004; Sidel 2006; Wilson 2015). In the final five months of 1997, incidents like these grew in frequency and scale, and they occurred in territories far beyond Java. Long-simmering tensions were exacerbated by the fact that, in the wake of the Asian financial crisis (which erupted in July 1997), the country descended into a cycle of hyperinflation, mass unemployment, and food shortage. During the first months of 1998, as the national situation grew more desperate, the country saw a second and more serious wave of urban violence, some of it now targeting the country's Chinese and Christian minorities (Hefner 2000; Purdey 2006; Sidel 2006).

A few of these latter incidents bore the tell-tale markings of regime supporters, hoping to stir up trouble using majoritarian appeals against minorities so as to deflect challenges to Suharto rule (Feillard and Madinier 2006:71–5; Purdey 2006). However, the conflict continued well beyond the period of Suharto rule.

Subsequent studies showed that most of the second-wave violence had as much to do with tensions between rival local coalitions jockeying for state resources as it did national-level engineering. Building as they did on local networks, many of the latter contentions *were* organized along ethnoreligious lines in a manner now more complex than the divide between Chinese and *pribumi* (van Klinken 2007:33). In West Kalimantan, for example, Dayak villagers, many of whom self-identify as Christian, unleashed fierce pogroms against Muslim Madurese immigrants who had migrated into their territories over the previous thirty years (Davidson 2008). In Hindu-majority Bali in the early *Reformasi* period, security militias known as *pecalong* were organized ostensibly to combat a growing wave of crime. Once in place, however, the militias took on the additional responsibility of curbing the flow of Muslim laborers from other parts of Indonesia into Bali (Gottowik 2014; Reuter 2009; Schulte Nordholt 2007). Even among the long-marginalized communities of forest dwellers and indigenous minorities who had suffered displacement under the New Order, the reassertion of customary (*adat*) identities and land claims often gave rise to exclusivist actions against recently arrived outsiders (Henley and Davidson 2008; Li 2001, 2014; Thufail 2012; Tyson 2011).

These and other developments showed that the crisis of social recognition and citizen belonging that swept Indonesia in the *Reformasi* era was not primarily a religious matter or, least of all, some dysfunctional effect of Muslim politics. In several regions (West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi) migrants who happened to be Muslim became victims of the worst violence. Some of the violence was also carried out by militias recruited from among local Christian populations. In still other cases, as in West Kalimantan, the violence pitted Muslims against other Muslims of different ethnic backgrounds (Davidson 2008). No less important, some of the territories that experienced the worst communal violence were not ones with long histories of ethnoreligious conflict.

As both Gerry van Klinken (2007:13) and the American anthropologist Chris Duncan (2014) have demonstrated, most of this second wave of violence, occurring in the first years of the *Reformasi* transition, was concentrated in small towns on islands beyond Java. Over the course of the New Order era, many of these territories had witnessed substantial migratory inflows and extensive urbanization from a low urban base. Populations in these same areas had also come to have a high level of economic dependence on the patronage-dominated state sector, without developing institutional mechanisms for managing access to state resources in a transparent or equitable manner. In settings like these during the first years of the *Reformasi* era, "it was and still is unclear what the basis for government is" (Bowen 2005:154; see Chapters 3 and 4). In the absence of that certainty, rival patronage networks used essentializing appeals to class, ethnicity, and religion to mobilize identity-based movements with the aim of capturing local administrations and the economic resources to which they provided access (Bertrand 2004; Duncan 2014; Wilson 2008).

The worst violence in the early *Reformasi* period took place in the provinces of Maluku and North Maluku in eastern Indonesia, as well as small portions of Central Sulawesi. In contrast to the religious demography of Indonesia as a whole, in broad swaths of these eastern territories Christians and Muslims live side by side in near-equal numbers. Over the course of the New Order, some of these districts had also witnessed an influx of Muslim migrants into regions that once had comfortable Christian majorities (Bräuchler 2015, 2017; van Klinken 2007:5; Al-Qurtuby 2016). In Ambon city and some other parts of Maluku province, for example, Muslim migrants had displaced local Christians from their previously dominant perches in the marketplace and state bureaucracy (Tahun 2021). With the collapse of the New Order and the implementation of administrative decentralization, long-simmering tensions became all the more combustible as rival patronage networks competed for control of the state and its resources (Al-Qurtuby 2015, 2016; Duncan 2009, 2014; Wilson 2008).

Not all parts of Indonesia witnessed these outbreaks of communal violence. The greatest portion of the violence was concentrated in just eight of Indonesia's thirty-four provinces (which numbered twenty-seven at the time). The combined population in these territories was approximately 7.5% of the national total (Aspinall 2011:295; cf. van Klinken 2007:5; Panggabean 2017). Notwithstanding their circumscribed scope, the "small town wars" (van Klinken 2007) that ensued took the lives of twenty thousand people and displaced 1.4 million others (Aspinall 2011; Bertrand 2004; Wilson 2008). Their political impact was even greater. Graphic videos of killings circulated on the internet, and the most shocking footage featured gruesome incidents of Muslim-Christian violence (Aragon 2001; Bräuchler 2003, 2017; Spyer 2002).

The scale and mediated horror of the post–New Order violence provided a rationale and opportunity for hardline Islamists to frame the conflict as evidence of Christian perfidy and the failure of Indonesia's *Pancasila* variety of multireligious citizenship. As the conflict escalated, political bosses in some of the worst-afflicted conflict zones, including Ambon, North Maluku, and Central Sulawesi, began to make confessional identities a central part of their mobilizational appeals. As a result, some local people in these territories *did* come to see the conflict in "religious" terms (see Duncan 2014:2). But the religiosity in question was not that of substantive ethical deliberation but a coarse and instrumentalized identity politics (see also Bakker 2016, 2017; Menchik 2019).

The recoloring of the conflict in religious-identity terms eventually caught the attention of Christian and Muslim publics in other nations of the world. Indonesian Christians appealed for moral and monetary support, and, as I was told by activists during a visit to Ambon in August 2015, some local militias purchased arms in the Philippines with the support of international Christian donors. An even more tactically consequential mobilization occurred in the Muslim community. Armed militias associated with the *Laskar Jihad* (see Chapter 4; Davis 2002; Hasan 2006) and an al-Qa'eda-linked group, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI, *Islamic Community*; see

ICG 2007), took advantage of new social media technologies to draw global attention to the conflicts raging in eastern Indonesia and to frame the conflict as proof of a Western and Christian conspiracy against Muslim-majority Indonesia (Chapter 4; Abdullah and Osman 2018; Aragon 2001; Spyer 2002). Eventually activists from these and like-minded organizations traveled to Maluku and Central Sulawesi to lend their support to the armed *jihad* cause. Their intervention was to have a dramatic effect on the eastern Indonesian violence (Chapter 4).

The coincidence of communal violence in eastern Indonesia with the presidential term of Abdurrahman Wahid (r. 1999–2001), the former leader of Nahdlatul Ulama and a well-known Muslim democrat, also provided an opportunity for exclusivist attacks on the Indonesian national leadership and democratic politics itself. Although an inconsistent executive as president, Wahid was highly regarded in the Christian and Chinese Indonesian communities and seen as a champion of equal rights for Indonesians of all religious and ethnic backgrounds (Barton 2002; Bush 2009; Feillard and Madinier 2006:86). In one of six interviews he had with me from 1999 to 2001, the leader of Indonesia's largest armed Islamist militia (the Laskar Jihad, "jihad militia"), Jafar Umar Thalib (1961–2019), described Wahid as a "communist" and a "traitor" to Islam (see Chapter 4). Jafar made no secret of the fact that he had close personal ties to several of the Suharto advisors who had reached out to radical Islamists in the final months of the New Order regime. However, in these same interviews, Jafar emphasized that not all of the senior leadership in the Indonesian armed forces agreed with his mobilizational initiatives in Maluku. More ominously, he told me that if any military officials "got in the way" of his campaigns, they would be "destroyed" (see Chapter 4).

It was the shadowy network of JI militants, however, that mounted the most serious challenge to democracy and citizen belonging in the face of the communal violence of the early Reformasi period. In a conversation with me in August 2000, the JI's spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, claimed to see the hand of Western "crusaders" behind the actions of Christian militias in eastern Indonesia (see Chapter 4). He also made no secret of his movement's support for al-Qa'eda's global mobilization against the West and those Muslims whom he described as "apostates" because of their support for democracy, human rights, and a religiously neutral citizenship (see Chapter 4; ICG 2002a; Solahudin 2013). Not coincidentally, Ba'asyir told me that he placed President Wahid at the top of his apostate list.

The JI campaign against democracy and Pancasila pluralism soon took a turn more violent than that of its Laskar Jihad rival. On Christmas Eve 2000, JI militants set off bombs outside churches in several Indonesian cities, killing nineteen people and injuring another 100. On October 12, 2002, JI terrorists exploded a truck bomb near a nightclub popular among Western tourists in a resort town in south Bali, killing 202 people and injuring another 290. In an interview with me two months after the second attack, Ba'asyir denied any involvement in the bombings. But he surprised me by admitting that the attack's instigators were graduates of the boarding school he directed in the village of Ngruki, outside of Solo in Central Java.

He dismissed the bombers' actions as no more than "naughty" (*nakal*). A moment later in the same interview, sensing the disquiet of my Muslim research partner in the face of so jocular a characterization of mass slaughter, Ba'asyir looked my colleague in the eye and said contemptuously, "[T]hey [the Bali club-goers] were all going to hell anyway."

In the face of these and other incidents, some international analysts concluded that it was just a matter of time before al-Qa'eda and its Indonesian supporters succeeded in their goal of turning Indonesia into a "second front" against the West (Abuza 2003). Many too concluded that Muslim society in Indonesia was in the midst of not only a "conservative turn" but a far-reaching Islamist radicalization. A decade later in 2015, the rise of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria revived many of these same anxieties. The Islamic State spawned several spectacular terrorist actions in Indonesia, including an attempted suicide attack on a downtown Jakarta mall in January 2016 (which, by bizarre coincidence, I had happened to visit two hours earlier on the same day). There have also been small but no less brazen attacks on Christians in Surabaya and other cities (IPAC 2018). From 2015 to 2019, several hundred fighters also set off to join the Islamic state in Syria and Iraq (IPAC 2014).

Yet, however tragic the loss of life, the wave of terrorist violence unleashed in Indonesia during the early 2000s and again in the 2010s never posed a serious threat to Indonesia's new political structure or to the country's mainstream Muslim organizations. The effort to redirect Muslim piety and affectivity into projects of radical structural reform failed to win the hearts and minds of the great majority of Indonesian Muslims. In tape-recorded interviews with four hundred Muslim educators and activists that I conducted between 2004 and 2015, a recurring theme was that the violence actually hardened Muslim democrats' and democratic Islamists' resolve to hold firm against violent extremism. The attacks also strengthened the efforts of Indonesia's security agencies and helped to convince an at-first skeptical Muslim public that local extremists, not Western spy agencies, were responsible for the terrorist attacks. By early 2007, police officials had arrested more than 200 JI activists, seized large stocks of weapons, and dismantled several bombing cells (Jones 2013:121). In the aftermath of ISIS attacks in Indonesia in 2016–17, security forces mounted an even more effective crackdown.

In short, notwithstanding its awful human cost, by 2001–02 the worst of the communal violence was over, and none of the comparable scale has broken out since (Aspinall 2011; Bertrand 2004; Wilson 2015, 2017). Notwithstanding an understandable moral panic, the impact of terrorist attacks by ISIS supporters in the 2010s was no more destabilizing. By these latter years, an ambitious and far-reaching decentralization of government was well underway, and regional economies were recovering to pre-transition levels. As I saw in visits to Ambon city in Maluku in 2015 and 2017, the peace in the worst afflicted regions was still not sufficient to allow refugees to return to their pre-conflict neighborhoods (Swazey 2021; Tahun 2021). Nonetheless, local governments and religious leaders

in Ambon and Maluku took bold steps to reopen markets, restore public services, and rebuild houses of worship (Bräuchler 2009; Duncan 2014, 2016; Al-Qurtuby 2018). As I saw in a visit to the State Islamic College (IAIN) in Ambon in August 2015, Muslim and Christian educators took the lead in grassroots programs designed to increase public dialogue across religious communities (see Tahun 2021). As he explained to me in a conversation that same month, the Governor of Maluku lent his name to these efforts, which he described as designed to turn Maluku into a "laboratory for peacemaking initiatives."

Defying analyst prognostications, Indonesia had survived the violence of the early *Reformasi* era, and the country weathered the challenge of ISIS subversion even more successfully. No less significant, most of the Muslim public had held firm in its commitment to democracy and a *Pancasila* version of multireligious citizenship. As will become clear in the pages that follow, none of these achievements would have been possible without the decades-long efforts of Muslim democrats to build a new consensus on democracy and multireligious citizenship among the Muslim public. The result was arguably one of the most significant shifts in political culture in the Muslim-majority world. It goes without saying that tensions and zones of incommensurability remained. As the Ahok mobilization had illustrated, these were far more significant with regard to matters of religious diversity and citizen equality than they were the legitimacy of democracy or the proper form of the state. This is to say that, although electoral democracy appeared relatively consolidated, citizen belonging in Indonesia was still very much in the making.

Muslims and Citizenship Under Reformation

After the anti-Suharto movement succeeded in pushing the authoritarian leader from power in May 1998, many international analysts remained skeptical of the civic and democratic commitments of the movement's Muslim base. Part of the skepticism had to do with the fact that a generation earlier, Muslims in Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah had joined with the Indonesian armed forces in a campaign of destruction against the Communist Party (Chandra 2019; Cribb 1990; Fealy and McGregor 2010; McGregor, Melvin, and Pohlman 2018; Robinson 2018). No less significant, the coalition that succeeded in ousting President Suharto in May 1998 was not uniformly democratic but heterogeneous in its ideological orientations. In addition to student groups and Muslim democrats, the movement included late-defecting members of the political, military, and religious establishment, few of whom had previously given evidence of democratic commitments (Aspinall 2005b; Bourchier 2019; Warburton and Aspinall 2019:264).

Analysts' misgivings about the prospects for democratic reform were reinforced by the fact that the man who succeeded Suharto in the presidency was his handpicked vice president, B.J. Habibie (1936–2019; see Fortuna Anwar 2010; Hefner 2000:131–43). As vice president, Habibie had coordinated the regime's outreach to the Muslim community in the tumultuous 1990s. He had not been involved,

however, in the regime's outreach to anti-democratic Islamists carried out in the final months of the New Order regime, from January to May 1998. The latter, divide-and-conquer strategy had initially been outlined in 1995 in a secret draft report prepared by intellectuals in think tanks established by members of the Suharto family and a small, "green" (i.e., Muslim-oriented) faction of the military (see Hefner 2000). However, the campaign was only fully inaugurated in the final months of the New Order regime in early 1998, which is when I was given a copy of the secret plan by a Muslim activist who had attended an organizing meeting with Suharto representatives (Feillard and Madinier 2006:72–5).

During the first phase of this campaign, in early 1998, Suharto allies saturated the newly launched internet with anti-Christian, anti-Chinese, and anti-democratic propaganda. Working with individuals linked to the Suharto-backed Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World (KISDI), regime operatives distributed tens of thousands of pamphlets in mosques across Indonesia that alleged that the country's democracy movement was actually an American and Zionist plot supported by Christian and Chinese Indonesians. These latter groups had chosen to make common cause with foreign agents, the document alleged, because in the 1990s Suharto had changed and begun to reach out to the country's Muslims while also standing up to U.S. demands for political reform. In light of this pro-regime propaganda, it was no coincidence that many of the riots that swept urban Indonesia in early 1998 took on anti-Christian and anti-Chinese colorings (Purdey 2006; Sidel 2006; Wilson 2015, 2017). However, the mainline Muslim leadership held firm and refused to rally to Suharto, committing itself instead to the cause of far-reaching democratic reform.

The Muslim leadership's success in this project is one of the unheralded triumphs of modern Indonesian history. The achievement also helps to explain just why, unlike its "Arab spring" counterparts in the Muslim Middle East and North Africa, Indonesia was able to sustain its transition to electoral democracy, notwithstanding significant carryovers from the New Order era as well as notable regressions in the quality of democracy. This history also demonstrates, however, that the leadership's efforts were more successful with regard to matters of electoral democracy than it was in its efforts to socialize an inclusive practice of citizen belonging.

Reformism's Challenges

After Suharto stepped down, Habibie was supposed to serve as the caretaker president until parliamentary elections could be held in June 1999 and the MPR could meet in October of the same year to choose a new president. (Direct elections of the president would be instituted in 2004.) Habibie's role in the post-Suharto administration was illustrative of one of the transition's most widely noted shortcomings: that the *Reformasi* movement had failed to displace the state-based elites and business oligarchs who had risen to prominence over the course of the New

Order (see the later sections and Buehler 2016; Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019; Hadiz 2018; Winters 2013). As Eve Warburton and Ed Aspinall have observed, Indonesia's democratization "produced [an] 'elite-biased democracy,' in which the interests of authoritarian-era economic and political elites are structurally protected" (Warburton and Aspinall 2019:265).

As it turned out, the Habibie government remained in power until Habibie lost a vote of confidence in the MPR in October 1999. However, to the surprise of many international observers, his administration *did* initiate far-reaching political reforms (Aspinall 2018; Fortuna Anwar 2010). In its first two years, the *Reformasi* government passed laws expanding press freedoms, legalizing independent political parties, and authorizing a referendum on independence in East Timor, which had been forcefully integrated into Indonesia in 1976 (Aspinall 2005b; Horowitz 2013). In the mid-1999, the national assembly passed two laws that mandated one of the most ambitious programs of administrative decentralization the late-modern world has seen, devolving myriad powers from the nation's capital to provinces, districts, and municipalities (Aspinall and Fealy 2003:3–4).

The most politically consequential reform implemented in the early *Reformasi* period, however, was the removal of the armed forces from its previously dominant perch in the state administration – a policy in which, to his credit, Habibie is said to have had a strong personal interest. Since the first years of Indonesian independence, processes of state formation and societal mobilization had "led to the emergence of a politically powerful and conservative army with a strong stake in the status quo" (Robinson 2018:295; see also Crouch 1978; Mietzner 2009). The army's grip on politics and the economy only increased under Suharto's New Order, as the regime put in place a military territorial administration designed to parallel and check the civilian bureaucracy. Initially the regime enacted the former measures with the aim of eradicating communist and leftist influences. But it soon used the parallel power structure to contain all challenges to its rule.

Seen from the perspective of these structural legacies, the reforms to military politics put in place under the Habibie administration were both far-reaching and impressive. The government separated the national police from the military, removed military commanders from civilian government posts, and severed ties between the military and the Golkar political party (Honna 2003; Mietzner 2009). The military's territorial command structure *did* remain in place, and this has allowed the military to retain a significant measure of influence in national and economic affairs (Aspinall 2005b; Robinson 2018). However, a quick binational comparison illustrates that the reforms were important and far-reaching nonetheless.

As Mietzner has noted, the role played by the military in Egypt's attempted transition in the 2010s showed "striking similarities" with that of the Indonesian military years a decade earlier in the early *Reformasi* period (Mietzner 2014a:436). Both militaries had a history of involvement in national politics; both also had significant holdings in the domestic economy. At a critical moment in each country's

political transition, however, the role played by the respective militaries diverged. In July 2013, the Egyptian army ousted the government of President Morsi, killing hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood activists and imprisoning thousands more (Bayat 2017:15; Brown 2013; Skovgaard-Petersen 2017:328–9). By contrast, several years earlier, at a no less decisive critical juncture, the Indonesian armed forces leadership had allowed the electoral and legislative reforms of the *Reformasi* era to move forward. One of the reasons political reformists in Indonesia were able to pre-empt any military meddling was that, unlike their counterparts in post-Mubarak Egypt, Indonesia's leadership had achieved "an intra-civilian consensus on fundamental issues of general governance [and] . . . the most important of these issues has been the role of Islam in state organization" (Mietzner 2014a:436). The latter consensus would be subject to new challenges as the *Reformasi* era advanced but would nonetheless hold.

Between 1999 and 2002, Indonesian legislators seemed to crown this list of democratic reforms by crafting four constitutional amendments designed to strengthen and expand civic and religious freedoms. Political analysts applauded the amendments as consistent with international human rights norms. They also recognized that if the new legislation was to be effectively implemented, it would significantly advance the cause of inclusive citizen belonging. Over the years that followed, however, enforcement of the regulations proved far more difficult than their legislative formulation (Lindsey and Pausacker 2016; Lindsey 2019). As the Australian legal scholar Tim Lindsey has observed, the laws themselves "were typically flawed or incomplete" and "characterised by a lack of compliance measures and sanctions." Another shortcoming was that "the key institutions given responsibility to administer the schemes created by the new laws were frequently weak" (Lindsey 2019:37). These shortcomings were compounded by a no less worrisome development outside the halls of state: "a growing culture of intolerant Muslim majoritarianism" in society (ibid.; see also Fealy 2016a, 2016b; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2020). The latter trend showed that, notwithstanding its success at convincing the Muslim public of the compatibility of Islam with electoral democracy, the mainstream Muslim leadership had not yet succeeded at convincing its followers of the benefits of a religiously inclusive citizen belonging.

Socializing Democracy

The Muhammadiyah and NU leadership's rejection of Suharto's transactionalist offer in early 1998 did not reflect a spur-of-the-moment decision. The leadership's actions were a later chapter in a decades-long effort to change the knowledge and practice of Islam in a manner that opposed Suharto's authoritarianism and aligned instead with the principles of electoral democracy and an Indonesian variety of multireligious citizenship. It is important to underscore this latter point so as to emphasize that the cultural background to these changes did not lie in what some

years ago was widely assumed to be Indonesian Islam's greater legacy of "tolerance" or syncretism-based civility (see also Menchik 2016).

With regard to the culture of religious tolerance, the historical record in Indonesia is actually rather mixed. Mainline Muslims in associations like the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah stand out in comparison to their counterparts in other Muslim-majority countries in having a long and proud history of commitment to the ideals of democracy and multireligious nationalism (Fogg 2020; Kersten 2015, 2017). But Indonesia has also always had a small but violent Islamist fringe, like that which rallied to the Darul Islam rebellion in several provinces from 1948 to 1962 (Chapter 4; Formichi 2012; Madinier 2015). No less serious, in the 1950s and early 1960s, the nationalist and democratic commitments of Indonesia's mainline Muslims were severely tested as the country descended into the polarized competition known as *aliran* ("stream," "current") politics, pitting Muslim mass organizations against secular nationalists and communists (Hefner 2000; Mortimer 1974; Sidel 2006). As Rémy Madinier has shown, the competition undercut efforts on the part of the leadership of the country's largest Muslim party, Masyumi, to "reconcile Islam and democracy" (Madinier 2015:xiii). Eventually it also led a significant portion of the Masyumi community to drift from its original democratic commitments toward an exclusivist Islamism. The downward spiral in national politics as a whole came to an awful climax in the anti-communist pogrom of 1965–1966 (see also Fealy 2016a; Robinson 2018).

Rather than some deeply rooted and unchanging culture of Muslim "tolerance," then, the social forces that abetted the ascendance of a democratic and inclusive current in Muslim politics during the *Reformasi* era had more to do with political and educational initiatives undertaken by the mainline Muslim leadership from the 1980s onwards (Chapters 1 and 5; Hefner 2000; Latif 2008; Lukens-Bull 2013). These were among the boldest programs for a democratic reformation of Muslim politics undertaken anywhere in the world.

What sociological processes made this far-reaching reform possible? Beginning in the 1980s, Muslim intellectuals and leaders from Indonesia's two largest mass Muslim organizations produced what the well-known theorist of comparative democratization, Alfred Stepan, has aptly described as a "core scholarship" that disseminated Islamic rationales for democracy and pluralist citizenship (Stepan 2014:286; cf. Abdillah 1997). These initiatives were part and parcel of a broader reconceptualization of Muslim politics and ethical traditions attempted by the mainline leadership. The efforts touched on a host of social justice matters, including alms giving and the poor, the "indigenization" (*pribumisasi*) of Islamic culture, and the rights and duties of Muslim women. These initiatives had become a major focus of discussion in the Muslim public sphere as early as the mid-1980s with the rise of what was widely described as the "new santri middle class" (Abdillah 1997; Machmudi 2008). By the mid-1990s, the discussion had acquired such momentum that it was giving rise to calls for curricular reforms in Muslim higher education (Abdullah 2017; Kersten 2015). In particular, and as

noted in Chapter 1, during these years the government-supported, State Islamic University system (UIN/IAIN) and the private, Muhammadiyah-owned network of colleges undertook curricular reforms that sought to expand their course offerings beyond the conventional Islamic sciences to include the history of Islam, as well as economics, sociology, political science, and law (see Chapter 5; Hefner 2009; Jabali and Jamhari 2002; Lukens-Bull 2013). Here at long last were the instruments for realizing the long-cherished reformist dream of reconstructing Islamic ethics and education by bringing them into dialogue with the sciences of the world (Abdullah 2020).

When these reform-minded initiatives were first introduced, anti-democratic Islamists and even some Western observers dismissed them as examples of the new Muslim leadership's determination to "secularize" Islamic learning so as to bring it in line with Suharto's repressive developmentalism (Husaini and Hidayat 2002). But the Muslim activists and intellectuals with whom I collaborated during those years, including the rectors of the two most important State Islamic Universities, Azyumardi Azra and Amin Abdullah, had no such misgivings (see Abdullah 2020). The initiatives drew in part on the bittersweet lessons learned from the eventually aborted efforts of modernist Muslim democrats in the early to mid-1950s to put aside the chimera of an "Islamic state" in favor of a commitment to constitutional democracy (Fealy and Platzdasch 2005; Madinier 2015). More substantially, however, they were also able to build on the example of a new generation of reform-minded intellectuals, including Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia (Barton 1995; Kull 2005) and the Pakistan-born reformist intellectual, Fazlur Rahman. Rahman had been Nurcholish Madjid's Ph.D. supervisor at the University of Chicago. All of these new Muslim intellectuals insisted that the Qur'an enjoins study of the sciences of the world as well as the sciences of revelation. More important yet, the Muslim democrats were convinced that what was especially needed at this point in history was a Muslim engagement with social sciences capable of strengthening democracy and pluralist citizenship by demonstrating their compatibility with Islamic ethical priorities (Chapter 4; Abdullah 2020; Wisdom 2022). In other words, rather than an epistemological populism characterized by a "simplification, dramatisation, confrontation, [and] negativity" (Brubaker 2019:33; cf. Saurette and Gunster 2011), the Muslim proponents of democratic renewal sought to build a public sphere and citizen ethics premised on an epistemologically expansive reformation of Muslim politics and citizen belonging.

Islamic Higher Education and Ethical Prioritization

Building on these late New Order aspirations, during the first five years of the *Reformasi* era Muslim educators in the upper tiers of the Islamic university system took the lead in formulating curricular materials on Islam and democracy, civic education, gender mainstreaming, and new approaches to Islamic law and ethics.

I discuss these reforms in greater detail in Chapter 5 (see also Abdillah 1997; Feener 2007; Jackson and Bahrissalim 2007; Kersten 2017; Kraince 2007; Lukens-Bull 2013; Jabali and Jamhari 2002; Ubaedillah 2018). The point to emphasize here is that specialists in Islamic education have long recognized that no program of democratic reform and citizenship inclusivity in Muslim-majority countries is sustainable without parallel reforms in Islamic education, not least with regard to Islamic ethics and law (Doumato and Starrett 2007; Herrera and Torres 2006). On this critical matter, Islamic higher education in Indonesia has been no less than a world leader.

These democracy-friendly initiatives were possible because the central current in the Muslim wing of the democracy movement had put in place a remarkable organization, one that bears a striking resemblance to the political assemblage regarded by two leading theorists of democratization, Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, as vital for any transition from authoritarian rule. In its Indonesian form, this assemblage was organized around "exemplary individuals" in higher education and Muslim mass organizations who worked tirelessly to create Islamic discursive rationales and educational modules in support of democracy and citizen rights. These same leaders then used their ties to Muslim civil society associations and educational institutions to disseminate this message to the broader Muslim public (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986:48–56; see also Hefner 2000).

A quick political comparison underscores the scale and distinctiveness of the subsequent Indonesian achievement with regard to this reformulation of Muslim public ethics. With the only partial exception of Tunisia (Bayat 2017:147, 217; Volpi and Stein 2015), Middle Eastern countries swept into the Arab spring after 2010 proved unable to build a reformist coalition of an enduring and transformative nature like that put in place in *Reformasi* Indonesia (Challand 2017; Volpi 2013). As Kuru has shown, in many Muslim-majority countries, an ulama-state alliance reinforced a "statist and hierarchical outlook" (Kuru 2019a:5) that "promoted established ulema at the expense of independent Islamic scholars and intellectuals" (Kuru 2019a:5). As David Pinault (2008) and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (2016) have similarly shown, in Pakistan a mobilizational impasse of this sort has plagued the proponents of democracy and inclusive citizenship since the establishment of the Islamic republic in August 1947. In that South Asian country, an otherwise gifted modernist Muslim intelligentsia, one that at times enjoyed the backing of reform-minded state officials has been repeatedly blocked in its efforts to establish alliances with educators and politicians linked to the country's vast network of madrasas and mass organizations. Not coincidentally, "the authoritarianism that frequently buttresses modernist ethical sensibilities in Pakistan has not done much to broaden their appeal" (Zaman 2016:197).

These cross-national comparisons make all the more apparent a comparative advantage enjoyed by reform-minded Muslim democrats in Indonesia compared to their counterparts in Arab-spring countries. Indonesian Muslim efforts in the fields of civic education and citizen belonging were not ivory-tower affairs but

broadly-based public initiatives backed by the executive leadership of the country's two largest Muslim social welfare organizations, the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, and supported by key bureaus in the MORA and Education and Culture. With their huge memberships, NU and Muhammadiyah are not just the largest of Indonesia's religious organizations; they are the largest Muslim social welfare organizations in the world (Burhani 2012; Bush and Munawar-Rachman 2014; Feillard and Madinier 2006; Nakamura 2012). The women's organizations associated with these Muslim associations are also the largest in the world, and their leadership in recent years has worked tirelessly to promote a reformed and egalitarian understanding of gender roles (Chapter 5; Feillard and van Doorn-Harder 2013; Rinaldo 2013). The single most important consequence of these mass organizations' pro-democracy programs is that contrary to the pattern seen in Muslim Brotherhood–populated portions of the Middle East, "the most insistent calls for reform have come not . . . from those seeking to establish a political system based on Islam" (Wickham 2002:1) but from Muslim organizations convinced that electoral democracy is a form of governance compatible with Islam.

Political Opening and the Question of Shariah

One additional political comparison with other Muslim-majority countries highlights the breadth of this reorientation of Muslim education and public ethics in Indonesia – as well as some of its lingering tensions. In many Muslim-majority lands, the late twentieth century's "Islamic awakening" (Ar., *sahwa*) gave rise to campaigns promoting implementation of a legislatively codified and state-enforced variety of "Islamic law" (*shariah*). Ironically, the model of Islamic law invoked in such campaigns has few direct precedents in classical Islamic history (see Layish 2004). On the contrary, as the sociologist of Islamic law and politics, Sami Zubaida, has observed, the conviction that the shariah in modern times should be codified by national legislators and enforced by the modern bureaucratic state represents "a triumph of European models" (Zubaida 2003:135; see also Chapters 1 and 7; Abou El Fadl 2019). Talal Asad has similarly observed that the state-sponsored-shariah ideal shows the influence of not classical Islamic legacies but modern Western traditions of governance with their emphasis on law as "a mode of universalization that civilizes, legitimizes, and administers" (Asad 2003:294; see also Hallaq 2013; Kuru 2019a; and Chapter 7).

Even if reflecting a postcolonial and Eurocentric understanding of law rather than one rooted in Islamic legal traditions, the contemporary appeal of such shariah idealizations in many Muslim-majority lands is understandable enough. The corrupted nature of state legal systems in many postcolonial nations has created a great public thirst for justice, one that many Muslim believers hope can at long last be quenched through projects of shariah implementation. Consistent with this idealistic aspiration, in the years following the Arab uprisings, mass-based mobilizations in support of a legislatively crafted and state-enforced shariah gathered momentum

in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and other countries (Volpi and Stein 2015). A similar process unfolded in northern Nigeria after the return to electoral democracy in the early 2000s (Kendhammer 2017). In all of these countries, "a wave of political openings . . . generated new demands for the codification and application of Islamic law in the public and private lives of citizens" (Kendhammer 2017:3). Unfortunately, and not coincidentally, in many of these cases, "legal Islamization has been associated with further authoritarianism of the political regime" (Kuru 2019a:40).

On this key point, however, Indonesia in the early democratic transition again proved distinctive in a manner that illustrates the success of reform-minded intellectuals at getting the Muslim public to rethink its priorities on matters of Islam and nation. Between 2000 and 2002 the Muslim-dominated National Assembly rebuffed Islamist proposals to change the constitution so as to require the state to implement the Islamists' model of "Islamic law" (*shariah*) for all Muslim citizens (Elson 2013; Hosen 2007; Salim 2008). The effort was opposed by a broad-based party coalition, but the core opposition came from the leadership of the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (Chapter 7).

As my interviews during these years with leaders in both organizations revealed, the opposition was not based on the secularist conviction that religion is a private matter that has no role in public life. Nor was the opposition grounded in the belief that the body of divine ethical guidance known as the shariah should not play a role in Muslims' public and private lives (see also Lindsey 2012). Surveys indicate that the great majority of Indonesian Muslims regard shariah as integral to any proper profession of Islam (see Chapters 5 and 7). Notwithstanding these views, and as Abdurrahman Wahid emphasized in a conversations with me at the presidential palace in January 2000 and again during his visit to Boston in October 2002, he and other Muslim leaders opposed efforts to promote state-enforced shariah on the grounds that the understanding of shariah it reflected was intellectually superficial and politically manipulative. These actors' real aim, Wahid argued, was not to engage Islamic legal traditions in a serious manner but to "play the shariah card" so as to boost the political fortunes of exclusivist Islamist parties (cf. Buehler 2016).

In a conversation in Yogyakarta in November 2001, the former national chairman of the Muhammadiyah, Amien Rais (a man who had played a role in the ouster of Wahid from the presidency in July 2001 and in the campaign against Governor Ahok in 2016–17), expressed similar misgivings about any such constitutional amendment. Although his views on interreligious matters tend to be exclusivist and anti-liberal, Rais in 2001 told me that the proposed constitutional reform ignored new Muslim scholarship on the "higher aims of the shariah" (*maqasid al-shariah*; see Chapters 1, 7, and 8) developed in Indonesia and other parts of the world in the latter half of the twentieth century (Emon 2018; Kamali 2008b; Kuru 2019a:7). In face-to-face interviews with more than 400 Muslim educators during summers from 2006 to 2010 (see the subsequent section), this same theme – that shariah is

divinely created and universal but that its implementation can and should vary in different times and places – emerged as one of the most broadly shared convictions (see also Chapters 5 and 7).

The Politics of Ethical Prioritization

The results of the national and regional elections held every five years since 1999 offer further proof of the achievement of Indonesia's Muslim democrats with regard to the reconceptualization of Islamic norms and politics and are an important background to the developments discussed in the chapters that follow. Each cycle of elections held since 1999 shows that when they enter the voting booth, some 80% of the Muslim electorate decline to choose parties, prioritizing the establishment of a so-called Islamic state. From one research perspective, this outcome in the electoral arena seems surprising. Conducted between 2008 and 2012, the Pew Research Center's study of religion, politics, and society in thirty-nine Muslim-majority societies, for which I served as a country advisor on Indonesia, revealed that the percentage of Muslim respondents in Indonesia "who favor making sharia the official law in their country" hovers around 72% (Pew Research Center 2013:15). Although this is significantly less than the percentage voicing such support in neighboring Malaysia (86%) or Afghanistan (99%), Pakistan (84%), and Bangladesh (82%), the proportion is still relatively large compared to countries like Tunisia (56%), Lebanon (29%), or Senegal (55%).

Other research, however, shows that these polling data require a broader and more critical contextualization. In a far-ranging survey of Indonesian public opinion, political scientists Thomas Pepinsky, William Liddle, and Saiful Mujani found that, when asked what their top three political priorities are, only 2.3% of Muslim respondents identify state implementation of shariah as among their first three. This figure contrasts with the 61.7% who prioritize improvements in public welfare, the 38.8% who foreground improvements in public education, and the 37.1% who cite reducing unemployment as their top priorities (Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018:92).

As Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani have also observed, survey findings like these help to dispel the myth that the growth in piety and religious observance among Muslims always brings with it heightened public support for a legislatively codified and state-enforced "Islamic law" (Chapter 7). The research I conducted over the *Reformasi* era fully accords with Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani's central conclusion: that rather than having a singular outcome (whether "conservative" or "liberalizing"), the growth of Islamic "piety must be understood alongside the complex, multifaceted transformations that are concurrently underway in Muslim societies" (2018:161). And among the most important of those transformations are those having to do with the question of how to balance political and economic flourishing with the varied ways of knowing Islam and coexisting with one's fellows in a modern, plural society.

On matters of citizen belonging, however, Muslim public opinion at times appears less steady and more "in-the-making" than it is with regard to the nation-state or democracy. For example, public opinion surveys indicate that the Muslim public's views on citizen belonging and gender equality show considerably more ambivalence than those with regard to electoral democracy as such. In 2005 and 2006, I worked with a polling team at the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (Pusat Penelitian Islam dan Maysarakat, PPIM) to carry out a survey of 1,000 Muslim educators on matters related to democracy and citizenship in seven provinces across Indonesia. Over the next few years, I complemented the surveys with ethnographic research and four hundred taped and transcribed interviews with Muslim educators from all organizational backgrounds. The findings confirmed that the efforts by leading Muslim intellectuals and educators from the 1990s onwards had contributed to a powerful surge in support for democracy among educators, as among the general Muslim public (Chapter 7). But the surveys also showed that on matters of gender equality and citizen inclusivity, educators' opinions are considerably less settled.

The survey findings provide a clear sense of this steadiness with regard to electoral-democratic values and ambivalence with regard to citizen equality. On one hand, the survey data confirmed that at a rate slightly higher than the Muslim public as a whole (see Chapter 7), the great majority of educators (85.9%) regard democracy as the best form of government for their country. The fact that they express equally strong support for such foundational citizen rights as equality before the law (94.2% support), protections for the media (92.8%), and other civil rights shows that the educators' commitment to democracy is neither formalistic nor majoritarian. My in-depth interviews with educators confirmed that these survey findings were echoed in personal opinion, indeed often in quite detailed ways. Seen from this perspective, the educational initiatives launched by mainstream Muslim educators and movement leaders in the late 1980s and 1990s appear to have had a real and lasting impact.

However, as is also the case with Muslims in the Middle East and South Asia, Indonesian Muslim educators' "strong support for Islam and democracy" is complemented by "widespread support for *Sharia*" (Esposito and Mogahed 2007:35; see also Kuru 2019a:23; Pew 2013). As I explore in greater detail in Chapter 5, some 72.2% of the educators expressed support for the idea that state law should be consistent with or derived from the Qur'an and Sunna. Here again, however, and consistent with Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani's findings, this seemingly unambiguous finding as measured by survey polling does not appear to translate into a consistent electoral practice. In my one-on-one interviews with four hundred of these respondents, only 24% reported that they had voted for a party dedicated to the cause of shariah implementation. No less striking, the far largest vote-getter among these parties, the PKS (see Chapter 4), has since the 1999 elections downplayed its commitment to state enforcement of shariah. The party "went from being a radical party that advocated Islamisation agendas to a moderate party that

promotes democracy and clean government" (Permata and Kailani 2009:56). In other words, and just as Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani showed, the educators' and the Muslim public's commitment to shariah does not appear to be a priority when most Indonesian Muslims go to the polls. As we will see in later chapters, the interest in the shariah and Islamic values appears far more pronounced and behaviorally specific, not with regard to matters of state but in relation to more proximate (i.e., near-at-hand) realities of personal piety, dress, gender norms, and sociality (Chapter 7).

On several matters, however, the support Indonesian Muslim educators express for an unreformed understanding of shariah ethics does appear to have significant gravitational pull, as measured in survey data if not actual electoral behavior. The effect is seen in educators' views on such matters as the suitability of having a non-Muslim as president (93.5% oppose). More than half of all Muslim educators also feel that Muslim women should not run for political office (see Chapter 6). Again, my surveys and interviews indicated that these values are *not* regarded as priorities when Muslim Indonesians enter the voting booth. But the data do suggest that there are significant zones of "friction" (Tsing 2005) with regard to what other, more inclusive-minded Indonesians might regard as citizen values. These findings from my research are consistent with recent surveys on Muslim educators conducted by leading Indonesian research institutes (see Fealy 2016a; Fealy and Ricci 2019; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2019; PPIM 2021; Syafruddin et al. 2018).

Other data from public opinion surveys indicate that ambivalences like these, although not priorities in actual political practice, are nonetheless widespread – and potentially "available" for political tapping under certain circumstances. In a thoughtful analysis of Muslim Indonesian views, based on the latest (2006) World Value Survey (WVS) data from Indonesia, Jeremy Menchik and Katrina Trost show that contrary to a view often heard in the 2000s, "Indonesian Muslims are neither exceptionally tolerant nor intolerant." The WVS is a cross-national survey conducted at regular intervals since 1981, which now includes detailed analyses of public opinion from more than 100 countries. Menchik and Trost compare Indonesian Muslim public opinion with that in other countries, Muslim and non-Muslim. Their findings lead them to conclude that the former are not tolerant in some exceptional way but are "about as tolerant as one would expect for a developing, newly democratic country with low levels of higher education" (Menchik and Trost 2018:390).

The authors' analysis also highlights several additional details of Muslim public opinion consistent with the present book's research findings. The survey data show, for example, that Muslim Indonesians are "significantly more tolerant of Christians and Hindus than Ahmadi Muslims, Shi'ite Muslims, or communists" (Menchik and Trost 2018:393). Menchik and Trost also point out that Muslim Indonesians who come from ethnic groups that include significant numbers of non-Muslims (like ethnic Javanese, Trojans, Balinese, and Chinese) "tend to

be more tolerant than those from homogenous ethnic backgrounds" (ibid.:399). Building on an argument Menchik presented in his earlier book on Islam and democracy in Indonesia (Menchik 2016), the authors conclude that "both NU and Muhammadiyah place clear limits on tolerance" (ibid.:402), especially when the matter in questions might "corrupt or undermine Muslims' faith." Based on my ethnographic research in Christian as well as Muslim Indonesian circles, the latter view on the ethical prioritization of religious heritage over individualistic freedom is in fact shared by the majority of Indonesians – Christian as well as Muslims (see Hefner 2017, 2019).

There is one additional finding in Menchik and Trost's reanalysis of the WVS data, however, that merits special mention and that converges with the findings discussed in the present book. The authors conclude that Muslim *leaders* from Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah "are considerably more tolerant" than the rank-and-file membership of these two organizations (ibid.:401). Menchik and Trost then add that, even if mainstream

> Indonesia is distinct . . . in being home to mass Islamic organizations whose leaders are more tolerant than would expect, are highly socially and politically engaged, and have been active in promoting the rights of religious minorities.
> *(ibid.:391)*

The leadership dynamic Menchik and Trost highlight is, I believe, part of a broader if understudied phenomenon in Muslim society in Indonesia. It is a key ingredient in what I call a "vanguardist" approach to public ethics and leadership (Chapter 7). A vanguardist approach to religious or political leadership is premised on the idea that the proper role of leaders is *not* to reflect or otherwise defer to the will of "the people" or some other social constituency but to lead the latter toward commitments deemed truer or more appropriate in light of some higher ethical standard. In other words, leaders of a vanguardist sort are not *expected* to think or behave like their rank and file. What is so unusual about things here in Indonesia is that since the 1980s a significant portion of Muslim society has lent its support to vanguardist leaders more inclusive, democratic-minded, and pluralist in aspiration than survey data indicate the Muslim public itself is. However, as the FPI campaign against Governor Ahok showed, the same style of vanguardist has been used by anti-pluralist Muslims, for example when Habib Rizieq appealed to Indonesians to recognize that the al-Ma'ida verse in the Qur'an proscribes Muslims being led by non-Muslim executives (see Mietzner and Muhtadi 2020).

In my interviews with Muslim leaders in Indonesia from the 1990s to the late 2010s, this theme of a discrepancy between leaders' views and those of their own rank and file was a recurring topic of conversation. In my regular meetings with him over an eighteen-year period, the late Abdurrahman Wahid signaled in no uncertain terms that he was keenly aware that on matters of religious tolerance, the 1965–6 killings, gender equality, and a host of other matters, many among his

NU supporters held views far less progressive than his own. In trademark Wahid manner, however, he described his response to this dilemma with a grin and a quip: "that's why I am supposed to lead and not merely follow!"

From Enclave to Counter-Public

Muslim society in Indonesia has always had significant counter-currents to vanguardist trends of a more inclusive and democratic nature. Aspiring to their own variety of vanguardist leadership, exclusivist Islamists promoting a religiously differentiated citizenship had already established a foothold in Indonesia even before the fall of the New Order. In those early years many were linked to the Muhammad Natsir-founded and (in part) Saudi-funded Indonesian Council for Islamic Predication (DDII; see Chapter 4; Bubalo and Fealy 2005). As noted earlier in this chapter, in the final years of the New Order Suharto allies attempted to mobilize this wing of the exclusivist Muslim community in support of the embattled Suharto regime.

However, other, less regime-linked exclusivist currents emerged in the 1990s as well. In the last decade of the Suharto regime, and all the more after the democratic opening of 1998–9, Islamist movements of a transnational nature, many modeled on the Muslim Brotherhood and Saudi-inspired varieties of Salafism, established a significant following on campuses and among segments of the new Muslim middle class (Bubalo and Fealy 2005; Chaplin 2018, 2021; Fealy and Hooker 2006:163–5, 178–80; Jamhari and Jahroni 2004; Machmudi 2006, 2021). Some in the leadership of these organizations were graduates of Middle Eastern universities, whose ranks had swelled since the early 1990s. In the *Reformasi* era, however, the greater portion of these new Islamists were homegrown (see Chapter 4; van Bruinessen 2021; Slama 2010, 2017; Yang Hui 2010).

There was a public sphere and social media dimension to many of the new Islamist currents. The liberalization of media controls seen in the post-Suharto era took place just several years after the arrival of the internet in the country, which reached major urban markets in the late 1990s and went national in the early 2000s (Hill 2003; Sen and Hill 2000). Although today Muslim democrats in Indonesia make effective use of social media, in these early years exclusivist Islamists moved more quickly to take advantage of the new communications technologies (Yang Hui 2010; cf. C. Hefner 2022; Spyer 2002). Research in other Muslim-majority countries has reported that Islamist groupings often enjoy a comparable competitive advantage with regard to social media technologies (Martin and Barzegar 2010:5). As noted at the beginning of this chapter, too, some among the latter groups made use of social media in the 2016–17 campaign against Governor Ahok (Fealy and Ricci 2019; IPAC 2018; see also Telle 2017).

The rise of new social media platforms was not merely a shift in communications technology; it was another chapter in an ongoing refiguration of knowledge and authority in the Indonesian Muslim community as a whole. Some thirty years

ago, the anthropologist Dale F. Eickelman provided an overview of some of the processes at work in these changes across the Muslim Middle East; most have direct parallels with developments in Indonesia. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990) studies of higher education in the West, Eickelman noted that, in conjunction with urbanization and new forms of mass communication, "[m]ass higher education in the Arab and Muslim worlds [since the 1980s] is reshaping conceptions of self, religion, nation, and politics" (Eickelman 1992:643). These new "ways of knowing," he noted, are in turn leading to "dramatic transformations of religious authority" (ibid.:645). In particular, the rise of "mass education fosters a direct, albeit selective, access to the printed word and a break with earlier traditions of authority" (ibid.). "The heightened sense of debate within the Muslim community," he added, fosters the development of "explicit statements of belief and practice" (ibid.:648). This in turn leads to "alternative constructions of Islam and of Muslim identity" (ibid.:649) and to the conviction that these new modes of religiosity are "systems that can be differentiated from others and consciously reworked" (ibid.:653; see also Eickelman and Piscatori 1996:38).

In broad swaths of the Muslim-majority world in the late 1990s, developments evolved even more quickly and agonistically than Eickelman had anticipated. The internet, the widespread adoption of cell phones, and the rise of new social media provided a hardware for the refiguring and pluralization of Muslim authority and public culture (Hoesterey 2015; Iqbal 2014). As the anthropologist Jon Anderson observed (1999:49), new social media technologies intersected with "the rising curve of expanded education . . . giving unprecedented access to the texts of Islam and opening interpretation to techniques outside the traditional frameworks of *madrasa* training." The classically educated scholars (*ulama*) who long dominated the religious field awoke to find a host of new rivals, including secularly educated new Muslim intellectuals, independent preachers, internet influencers, and social media chat groups.

A similar process unfolded here in Indonesia (Hoesterey 2015; Machmudi 2008; Saat and Burhani 2020a, 2020b; van Bruinessen 2021). In Indonesia, however, the change was made all the more consequential because it coincided with three no less momentous social developments: the return to electoral democracy in 1998–9, the growth of the new Muslim middle class, and the growing commercialization of Indonesian society, including its radio and television media (Rakhmani 2016). As Slama has noted, a generation earlier "an Islamic scholar's reputation depended mainly on his religious education: where, at which institution, with whom, and how long he had studied" (Slama 2017:97). However,

> with the rise of electronic media, . . . we can observe a situation in Indonesia today where some of the most prominent preachers cannot show the credentials that the preceding generation need to occupy a respected position in the field.
>
> *(ibid.)*

"The transformation of Indonesia's Islamic preacher economy is currently undergoing," he concludes, "rests not only on a pluralization of religious authority" but also on online exchanges with a digitally engaged Muslim public (ibid.:102).

As emphasized in the previous chapter, for most of the Muslim public developments like these have played a less decisive role in reshaping preferences with regard to state-based and structural matters than they have proximate matters of piety, consumption, and lifestyle. But not all of the changes have to do with non-state or near-at-hand realities. One consequence of developments like these is that, rather than the "emergence of the public" marked by "circles of reciprocity and mutual obligations, which also allows for the crystallization of a notion of social welfare and general interest" (Eickelman and Salvatore 2002:106), Muslim society in Indonesia has experienced an enclaving of competing Muslim publics and counter-publics.

In a recent overview of "degenerations of democracy" in the modern West, Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor have noted a similar tendency. They observe that "spectacular changes in communication and information technologies" have been responsible for "upending the dynamics of the traditional bourgeois public sphere, long seen as the prerequisite for democratic will-formation" (Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022:349). With its infrastructure of mosques and religious schools, the Muslim public sphere always differed in important respects from its Western counterpart. Nonetheless, the changes wrought by new social media platforms in Muslim public spheres have been no less consequential. Rather than coming together to engage in reasoned discussion in a shared public sphere, many Islamist groupings use social media to reinforce barriers *against* communication and sociability across ideological divides. The groups then use these barriers and the enclaved identities they facilitate to create a counter-public that, it is hoped, can at some point assert itself in opposition to broader Muslim society. In so doing their long-term goal is to convert pietistic cultural capital into a more structurally oriented Muslim politics.

In his description of Salafi activists in and around the city of Yogyakarta in south-central Java, Chaplin captures an especially vivid example of this enclaving tendency:

> Salafi activists create enclaves that act as . . . a "wall of virtue," where modes of dress, speech, and voluntary social interaction are portrayed as characteristics of a pious world juxtaposed against the morally vacant spaces outside its boundaries.
>
> *(Chaplin 2021:75)*

Not all among the exclusivist pious are willing to resign themselves to social enclaving rather than political transformation. As Chaplin himself reports, in 2016–17 WI activists played a central role in the mobilization against Governor Ahok, putting aside what had previously been their preference for person-to-person proselytization over matters of state (Chaplin 2021:133–5; Chapter 4). In so

doing, the WI leadership sought to convert their membership's piety and religious solidarities into political capital capable of being deployed beyond the borders of their virtuous enclave – for the purposes of not public-sphere deliberation but state transformation.

As I will discuss in further detail in Chapter 4, the *Reformasi* era saw many efforts like these, in which an organizational leadership or celebrity preacher sets out to redirect the resurgence's affectivities and social energies away from proximate pietism toward systems-transforming mobilization. One development in the early 2000s stands out as a particularly striking example of this trend and serves as a reminder of the limits of the Muslim democrats' otherwise impressive initiatives in the 1990s and early 2000s. The development has to do with the semi-governmental MUI (see Chapter 4). The MUI is an organization that comes closest in organization and ideology to the ulama-state alliance that Kuru has identified as reinforcing "the marginalization of the intellectual and bourgeois classes" in premodern and modern Muslim societies (Kuru 2019a:8). The MUI was established in 1975 at President Suharto's instructions with the aim of providing a bridge between the regime and Muslim scholars so as to enhance regime control (Ichwan 2005, 2013; Hasyim 2014). In its first quarter century, the MUI barred participation by exclusivist Islamists and other actors interested in replacing the Indonesian nation-state with an Islamic state. Regarded during the New Order period as overly acquiescent in its dealings with the Suharto government (although not on all issues; see Hooker 2003), in the first months of the *Reformasi* era the MUI awoke to find itself criticized by Islamists and inclusivist Muslims alike as a now-obsolete instrument of New Order control.

In the face of these challenges, a new MUI leadership in the early *Reformasi* period resolved to demonstrate its continuing public relevance by declaring its independence from the state and rebranding itself as a "civil society" organization – albeit one determined to play a central role in shaping government policy on religion and citizenship (Sirry 2013). A key tactic in the MUI's new tack was to recruit from the ranks of anti-system Islamists previously barred from the Council, including anti-system exclusivists like the HTI and the MMI (see Chapter 4; Hilmy 2021). Notably *absent* from the MUI's representational outreach were the liberal, progressive, and feminist Muslims who a few years earlier had figured so prominently in the vanguard of the anti-Suharto democracy movement. In keeping with its campaign of exclusivist outreach and anti-progressive stigmatization, the MUI also rebranded itself as the national guardian of Islamic morality, a morality it defined in unambiguously exclusivist terms.

In July 2005, the growing influence of anti-pluralist ideas within MUI circles was vividly illustrated when the MUI issued a fatwa condemning "secularism, liberalism, and pluralism" as contrary to Islam (see Chapter 4; Gillespie 2007; Lindsey 2012). The MUI issued another fatwa around the same time, condemning Indonesia's small community of Ahmadiyah Muslims as heretical and calling for the group's disbanding (Burhani 2013a). The antipathy shown toward the

Ahmadis was not new. Decades earlier, in 1980, the MUI had issued a fatwa that had adopted an equally condemnatory position on the Ahmadiyah. Relatively indifferent to MUI directives, the Suharto regime declined to take action against the group. In the open and contentious environment of *Reformasi* Indonesia, however, the MUI leadership realized the time was right to reissue its call for the group's banning. Hardline militias in groups like the FPI (Chapter 4) welcomed the MUI declaration and used it to justify violent attacks on Ahmadis and other religious minorities (Hilmy 2010:99–134). Although the broader structural impact of such mobilizations was limited, the campaigns provided hardline Islamists with a model for channeling piety into a decidedly anti-liberal project of political mobilization and citizen-making (Hadiz 2018; Menchik 2019).

Conclusion: Islam and Nation Agonistes

Although Indonesia's exclusivist Islamists have failed to convert Indonesia's Islamic resurgence into political capital capable of effecting significant structural change (see Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018:5), some have made progress in their attempts to transform themselves from narrow enclaves of virtue and solidarity into full-blown political mobilizations (Chapter 4). One especially striking feature of this dualistic pattern – impasse in elections, progress in the public sphere – is that since the 2010s the majority of Indonesia's Islamists have shifted away from earlier demands for the establishment of an "Islamic" state and declared their allegiance to the ideals of the Unitary National Republic of Indonesia (*Negara Kesatuan Republic Indonesia*; NKRI). Tellingly, however, even as exclusivist Islamists have adjusted their aspirations with regard to the NKRI state, they have not given up on their calls for a differentiated, asymmetrical, and Muslim supremacist variety of citizen belonging (Arismunandar 2019; Bourchier 2019; Chaplin 2018; Hefner 2018; Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida 2018). Democracy in its narrowly electoral form is consolidated and enjoys broad public support (Liddle and Mujani 2013); the ideals and practices of inclusive citizenship are anything but secure.

It is important not to misrecognize the cultural complexity of the Islamic resurgence in Indonesia by measuring its effects in relation to state-oriented political mobilization alone. Survey research and ethnographic studies confirm that the Islamic resurgence that has transformed this Southeast Asian country since the early 1980s has been among the most far-reaching in the Muslim-majority world, even if its impact on state structures and political elites has been limited (Hasan 2000; Mujani 2003; Pew 2013). The signs of this change in daily life and society are everywhere. The wearing of the Islamic headscarf by women has increased from a small minority in the 1970s (an estimated 6% of university students) to the great majority today (Brenner 2011; Smith-Hefner 2007a; Parker and Nilan 2013). Participation in Islamic study groups, both in person and online, has soared, especially among youthful members of the Muslim middle class (van Bruinessen 2021; Chaplin 2021; Gade 2004; Hoesterey 2015; Howell 2008; Slama 2017).

Women's participation in the women-led Islamic study circles known as *majelis taklim* rose in the 2000s to fourteen million people, exceeding that of men's groups (Chapter 5; Winn 2012:3; Doorn-Harder 2006:215–18). Islamic arts and dress once deemed unfashionably parochial are today at the forefront of upper-class consumption (George 2010; C. Jones 2007; Rasmussen 2010). Since the early 2000s, television broadcasting once dominated by Western and East Asian programming has accommodated an array of Islamically themed shows, including Islamic soap operas (*sinetron Islami*; see Barkin 2014; Hoesterey and Clark 2012; Rakhmani 2016:33–67). One of the most powerful consumer trends of the past two decades has been the rise of "halal consumption" – which is to say, goods and services are seen as indexical of both middle-class social standing and Islamic virtue (Hoesterey 2017; Rudnyckyj 2010). Last but not least, the localized Islamic traditions for which Indonesia was once renowned, and which two generations ago enjoyed the support of the majority of ethnic Javanese (Geertz 1960a), have shrunk to a small fraction of their former size – or been reinterpreted as "cultural" rather than "religious" phenomena (see Chapter 3; Beatty 1999, 2009; Cederroth 1981:996; Hefner 1987a, 1987b, 2011a; Ricklefs 2007, 2012). More than "conservatism" in any *literal* sense of the term, then, Indonesian Islam in the democratic era has been characterized by the ongoing reconstruction of received social ways and a heightened – if deeply agonistic – struggle over the proper forms and meanings of Islam and citizen belonging.

Four qualities stand out from the great flow of events that characterized this historic coincidence of Islamic resurgence, democratic transition, and capitalist commercialization. All four are the background to the larger story the remaining chapters of this book will tell. The first is that, notwithstanding the resurgence's transformative effect on society, the cultural capital and solidarity created by the resurgence have for the most part not proved amenable to conversion into a broad-based and Islamist-oriented movement for the remaking of state structures. Instead, and in striking contrast with the pattern seen in some parts of the Arab Middle East in the early phases of the Arab spring (but see Bayat 2017), social movements and political parties favoring structural or systemic change have fared poorly in the *Reformasi* period (see also Hadiz 2016). This is also in contrast with political developments in Indonesia during the 1950s when 40% of the country's electorate cast their vote for parties dedicated to the establishment of a so-called Islamic state. As noted earlier in this chapter, this pattern also stands in contrast to public opinion surveys that at first indicate most Muslim Indonesians would prefer their legal system be based on shariah law (see also Chapter 7). However consistent these survey findings, most Indonesian Muslims do not in fact regard state-enforced implementation of shariah as a political priority. "The overwhelming majority disagree . . . that the Five Principles [i.e., the Pancasila] should be amended" (Mujani 2019:329).

The second feature that stands out from this phenomenon of Islamic resurgence in an era of democratic transition is that the domain where Islamic values and normativities have had their most transformative impact is not with regard to structural

matters or state-level politics but in everyday piety and sociality, including most conspicuously that of a gendered nature (Robinson 2009; Smith-Hefner 2019). To a remarkable degree, state operations and patronage politics today operate in a manner that shows great continuity with New Order patterns (Hadiz 2018:569; Warburton and Aspinall 2019). By contrast, the near-at-hand realities that give an Islamic color to everyday life – religious greetings, Islamic dress styles, *Islami* courtship patterns, *halal* dining, and participation in Islamic study circles – have changed in a manner that shows a growing public desire to live in a manner seen as consistent with Islamic normativities, suitably adjusted to middle-class sensibilities.

In his studies of Islam and everyday politics in the Muslim Middle East, Asef Bayat (2013) has referred to this latter variety of nonpolitical piety as "post-Islamist" and "passive." By this he means that post-Islamism foreswears any interest in broad-based structural (i.e., "state-oriented") changes, giving up on earlier Islamist aspirations for a "religious state, sharia law, and moral codes" (Bayat 2013:4). Public opinion in Muslim Indonesia does converge with the post-Islamist publics Bayat describes in the Middle East and North Africa, in that both desire to channel their piety not into grand schemes for structural transformation but into near-at-hand matters like daily prayer, Islamic dress, Arabic greetings, and halal consumption. However, in one respect Bayat's phrase is not entirely apt. Although these changes in lifeways may appear "passive" in relation to the grand schemes for state remaking Bayat rightly associates with earlier generations of Islamists, they are not passive in any sociological sense. In fact, they are profoundly transformative of many of the realities at the heart of everyday living and within which most ordinary Muslims craft a way of life.

As noted earlier, some Western analysts have tended to view the resurgence's tack since the early 2000s as evidence of a "conservative turn in Indonesian Islam" (Chapter 1; van Bruinessen 2013a, 2013b; Sebastian, Hasyim, and Arifianto 2021). But few of the changes promoted by Indonesia's Muslim exclusivists are conservative in any literal sense of the term. As Jerry Muller (1997:5) has shown in a far-ranging history of conservatism in the modern West, at the heart of any genuinely conservative project is the conviction that certain institutions and lifeways must be defended and preserved "because eliminating them may lead to harmful, unintended consequences." By describing recent developments as conservative, Indonesia analysts risk overlooking the fact that groups like the MMI, the FPI, and WI do not seek to *conserve* Indonesian traditions of Islamic sociality and observance but to do away with them in the name of a totalizing and anti-pluralist profession of Islam (see Chapters 4, 5, and 7). Indeed, although the great majority of what Amin Abdullah (2020) has called "mainstream" Muslims in Indonesia have little interest in broad-sweep structural changes, many *are* intent on initiating change in near-at-hand aspects of their daily lives (Jones 2007; Smith-Hefner 2019).

Another reality obscured by a too-quick recourse to the concept of a "conservative turn" is the fact that in domains as varied as Islamic higher education

(Chapter 5), women's rights and employment (Chapter 6), and new approaches to Islamic legal traditions (Chapter 7), Muslim Indonesia is among the most dynamic societies in the Muslim-majority world (Kersten 2015). Here, as in so many other examples, Muslim society in Indonesia seems animated, less by a uniform conservative turn than by a virulent and creative agonistic plurality (Chapter 1, 4, and 7).

A third characteristic of the Islamic resurgence in democratic Indonesia has to do with changes in class and new social media and the way in which both developments reinforced a focus on micro-level piety rather than state-structural change. Between 1999 and 2020, the country's "secure" middle class grew from less than 10% of the population to more than 20%. The less secure "aspiring middle class" was comparable in size (World Bank 2020), meaning that almost 40% of Indonesia's population was either securely middle class or middle class but "vulnerable." No less significant, the great majority of this new middle class was concentrated in Indonesia's urban areas. Breaking with the profile of the Muslim middle class of the early twentieth century, the majority too had acquired the social capital required for their ascent into the middle class by way of not market trade or agriculture but higher education (World Bank 2020). The greatest portion of this new Muslim middle class was employed squarely if precariously within Indonesia's booming capitalist economy.

No less significant, there was a media dimension to this new Muslim middle class. Over the course of the same three decades, television ownership had expanded from just 4% of households to more than 90% by the 2010s (Gallup 2012). As television ownership became widespread, the percentage of the population relying on radio for news and information declined from more than half of the population in 2006 to less than a quarter by the early 2010s. Access to the internet also surged, most of it provided by way of the mobile phones that some 80% of the population own (Gallup 2012:2).

The combination of urbanization, television viewing, and mobile phone ownership transformed the ways in which Indonesians acquired and consumed information, including that related to religious affairs. A state monopoly from 1962 (when the country's national television channel was established) to 1987, the first private television stations were established in the final decade of the New Order regime between 1987 and 1998 (Rakhmani 2016:17). Although all stations were at first awarded to Suharto cronies, in the aftermath of *Reformasi* new commercial stations were established, and the ownership profile became more varied. So too did the scale of the new media's commercialization (see Steele 2018). Adding to the complexity, the liberalization of media ownership was accompanied by "the expansion of local moguls" (Rakhmani 2016:21), many of them with ties to rival political parties. By the 2010s there were six large media conglomerates, many operating on the basis of "tacit concessions between political parties and media owners, who are in many cases one and the same" (Rakhmani 2016:24).

Over these same years, there was an unprecedented expansion in television programming of a broadly Islamic orientation; none of it emphasized political

mobilization or change. In the 1980s and 1990s, the national television company, TVRI, had offered time slots of a quarter hour or half hour each week to representatives from each of the five, state-recognized religions; the total volume of Islamic programming, however, remained small, except in evenings during the Ramadhan fasting month. The bulk of the programming also focused on personal matters of lifestyle and ethical living and steered clear of explicitly political themes.

The first full-length Islamic television dramas, known locally as *sinetron religi*, were produced in the late 1990s and soon came to be regarded by the major television companies as popular with the viewing public and inexpensive to produce. In the more contentious environment of the *Reformasi* era, the major television stations also realized that it was in their economic interest to produce a greater amount of Islamic programming (Rakhmani 2016). Among other things, "[t]elevision stations responded . . . by producing low cost Muslims shows as an attempt to neutralize the negative effects of their predominantly US-derived television programmes" (Rakhmani 2016:41). As with the Islamic "supernatural reality shows" that captured audience share after 2002, most of this programming was also self-consciously nonpolitical. "In other words, commercial forces had mainstreamed Islam into a system once occupied by state nation-building programmes" (Rakhmani 2016:61). The result was that, although the variety of Islamic-show formats increased, "the content remained within the safety of cultural boundaries established during the New Order" (ibid.:621).

The fourth and final characteristic of the Islamic resurgence in *Reformasi* Indonesia is the most politically important but also the most uncertain with regard to its future course and societal consequences. Notwithstanding the fact that for the moment most pious Muslims have little interest in far-reaching systemic change, a recurring feature of Muslim politics in this country will almost certainly involve the efforts of Islamist activists to convince their Muslim fellows that they have not gone far enough in their profession of piety and that an authentic Islamic observance must include broad-based structural change. That, after all, was the message Habib Rizieq and Action 212 leaders sought to send in their campaign against Governor Ahok in 2016–17. Even if ignored by the majority of Muslims, messages of a similar nature are likely to remain a feature of Indonesian politics for some years to come.

Two generations ago, Indonesia had a reputation as a country in which Islam was but a thin "veneer" over religious traditions that owed more to the archipelago's Hindu, Buddhist, and indigenous past than they did Islam as such (Geertz 1960a, 1968). As the eminent historian of global Muslim civilization, Marshall Hodgson (1974:551), made clear in a critique of Clifford Geertz's (1968) account of Islam in Indonesia, this characterization was always too simple. It erred in taking a modernist and scripturalist characterization of Islam as the civilizational norm, thereby overlooking the diversity within Islamic traditions in general and in Asia and Indonesia in particular (cf. Beatty 1999; Formichi 2020, 2022; Woodward 1989). In this manner, and as I explore further in Chapters 4 and 5, Geertz's

portrayal reproduced the tendency in many Western circles to identify the most authentic varieties of Islam with those that conform to what the late Shahab Ahmed (2016:125) decried as a "legal supremacist conceptualization" of Islam.

Whatever it once was, Islam in Indonesia today is not a superficial veneer, and the cultural changes taking place in private lives and proximate social spheres are far-reaching. But it is no less true that Muslim public opinion in this country appears considerably less settled on matters of citizen belonging and gender equality than it is on matters of halal consumption or electoral democracy. Although in surveys Indonesian Muslims voice strong support for democratic elections and an array of institutional freedoms, on questions of religious freedom, women's rights, sexual minorities, and public morality "many Indonesians demonstrate only weak support for . . . liberal norms . . . that underpin democratic quality" (Warburton and Aspinall 2019:272; cf. Chapter 4). My findings agree with this conclusion but also suggest that many of these same cultural attitudes are still "in the making."

One fact must be emphasized. It would be a mistake to regard exclusivist currents in Muslim society as the product of Islamic doctrines or some deep-rooted or universal feature of Muslim culture. As Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida (2018) have noted, survey data indicate that, prior to the campaign against the Christian Chinese governor of Jakarta in 2016–17, exclusivist attitudes toward non-Muslims had been moderating, especially after the communal conflicts in eastern Indonesia had come to a close. As the authors (2018:167) also demonstrate, however, the 2016–17 campaign against Governor Ahok put new wind in the sails of the idea that Islam requires Muslims to reject non-Muslims as leaders. As Bourchier (2019), Facal (2020), Lindsey (2012), and Hadiz (2018) have all shown, these sentiments of religious exclusivity have in turn been instrumentalized by "secular" politicians seeking to convert uncivil sentiments into private political gain. "As is well known, many of the so-called Perda Syariah [local regulations of vaguely "shariah" inspiration; see Chapter 7] were in fact produced by local governments controlled by these so-called secular nationalist parties rather than Islamic ones" (Hadiz 2018:573). No less remarkably, anti-pluralist and anti-minority sentiments have at times been "more pronounced in the upper and middle classes than among the poor" (Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida 2018:169; see also Muhtadi and Halida 2021).

The ascendance of these and other movements intent on repudiating Indonesian Islamic and national traditions has generated a backlash, especially on the part of the current Nahdlatul Ulama leadership as well as the pro-pluralist vanguard within the Muhammadiyah. Since 2010, the NU leadership has sought to rally the Muslim public to the idea of "Islam Nusantara" – that is, Islam as practiced in the archipelago (see Chapter 7; Staquf 2020). Although the anti-anti-pluralist current within the Muhammadiyah is a bit less ambitious, the organization's central leadership has also rallied in defense of religious minorities and provided a sophisticated ethical framework for integrating pluralist values into Islamic ethical traditions (Burhani 2018, 2019; Mu'ti and Khoirudin 2019; Qodir 2020). No less significant, leading figures from Aisyiyah, the autonomous women's organization associated

with Muhammadiyah, have created far-reaching programs for advancing women's equality and social welfare (see Chapter 6; It 2005; Dzuhayatin 2015; Qibtiyah 2007, 2021; van Doorn-Harder 2006). Last but not least, and beyond the boundaries of Indonesia's two Muslim mass organizations, artists and people of letter like the Sufi poet and musician, Emha Ainun Nadjib (b. 1953), have developed artistic genres that dramatize an Indonesian variety of inclusive pluralism and interreligious recognition (see Daniels 2009:118).

The question these developments raise, and which the remaining chapters in this book seek to address, is whether this growing *plurality* of Islamic currents can be "scaled up" (Evans 1996; Hefner 2000) into a stable and inclusive practice of citizen belonging. The latter achievement requires more than the staging of democratic elections; it requires processes of people- and solidarity-making – projects that may prove particularly challenging in diverse societies (Banting and Kymlicka 2017). Calhoun reminds us that even achieving an analytic understanding of such processes is no easy matter: "We are poorly prepared to theorize democracy if we cannot theorize the social solidarity of democratic peoples" (Calhoun 2007:153). He also reminds us that it was not Western Enlightenment ideals that drew most Western publics to the ideals of democracy and citizen equality; it was nationalism and citizen belonging. And it is the form that nationalism of a notably religious variety takes here in Indonesia that will prove decisive in determining the values and practices of public Islam and citizen belonging.

All evidence indicates that, on this last point, the struggle for the ethical heart of Islam and nation in Indonesia has arrived at a critical juncture; it remains a work in progress. This uncertainty noted that few countries in the world today have an array of vanguardist organizations and intellectuals – women as well as men – more actively committed to the cause of pluralist inclusivity than those here in Indonesia. What remains to be seen is whether a critical juncture will arrive "when both agency and structural conditions are available for a systematic change" (Kuru 2009:27) of a decisive and enduring nature. More specifically, "[t]he idea of democracy requires some structures of integration, some cultural capacity for internal communication, some social solidarity of the people" (Calhoun 2007:153–4). In an era marked by widespread democratization as well as Islamic resurgence, the precise contours of this "social solidarity of the people" will prove decisive in determining the breadth and depth of citizen belonging and its "degrees of full inclusion in society" (Beaman 2016:850).

3

RELIGIONIZATION AND THE POLITICS OF RECOGNITION

The two previous chapters have shown that the years following Indonesia's return to electoral democracy in 1998–9 were accompanied by a powerful upsurge in religious observance among the country's Muslim population. The resurgence built on a growing public interest in Islamic learning and practice that had become steadily more pronounced in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a process coinciding with the country's booming capitalist development (Daniels 2009; Hefner 1987a, 2000; Hoesterey 2015:9). Indonesia's resurgence emerged a decade after a similar deepening of Islamic observance had gotten underway in Malaysia, the Middle East, and North Africa (Esposito and Mogahed 2007; Kuru 2019a; Peletz 2002).

Notwithstanding its far-reaching social impact, during most of the New Order period the resurgence's influence on political affairs had been limited. As we have seen, much of the Muslim public associated religious piety not with sweeping structural change but with near-at-hand forms of Islamic observance, sociability, and lifestyle. Certainly there were broader political influences on the resurgence's quietist pathway as well. During all but the final years of the Suharto era, repressive state controls remained in place on Islamist movements that might have challenged the regime's coercively restrictive interpretation of the Pancasila state ideology (Bourchier 2015; Hadiz 2016; Ichwan 2012). No less significant, the regime succeeded at controlling large-scale defections from the ranks of governing elites, in large part because "recruitment, promotion and retirement for state elites were . . . ultimately regulated by President Suharto" (Buehler 2016:3; cf. Warburton and Aspinall 2019). During these same years, the country's two mass-based Muslim associations, the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, maintained their commanding position in Muslim society, and both remained unswerving in their commitment to Indonesian traditions of multireligious nationalism, as well as their opposition to proposals to replace Pancasila governance with an ostensibly Islamic state.

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-3

The highly circumscribed impact of Islamist political appeals, however, did not mean that all questions regarding the place of Islam in public affairs had been settled. Even as calls for the establishment of an Islamic state were deflected, the post-Suharto transition witnessed an intensified debate over just which Islamic values should predominate in public life, and precisely what the role of the state should be in their promotion. Several events during these years bore witness to these contentious trends. By the 2000s, Indonesia had the notable distinction of ranking among the top five countries in the world with the greatest number of state-imposed restrictions on religious freedom. The other countries enjoying this distinction were China, Egypt, Russia, and Iran (Pew 2019). In 2010, Indonesia's Constitutional Court – another institutional by-product of *Reformasi*-era reforms (see Butt 2016, 2019; Lindsey 2019; Lindsey and Pausacker 2016) – issued a landmark ruling in which it articulated what appeared to many observers as the new governing consensus on matters of state regulation of religion. The ruling made clear that Indonesia is not an Islamic state. But it simultaneously affirmed the state's right to define, promote, and otherwise regulate religion in the interest of public safety and morals.

In later chapters I will explore the consequences of this ruling for grassroots political and religious contests in the *Reformasi* era. The present chapter has a more specific focus: it aims to explain how this decidedly interventionist relationship of religion and state – where "some religions are privileged over others" (Fox 2012:73) – came to be normalized in modern Indonesia, even as most of the Muslim public showed little interest in establishing an Islamic state. In particular this chapter examines how ongoing developments in the ways in which Muslim Indonesians know, practice, and prioritize what they regard as "religion" in general and Islam in particular made this new governing consensus on religion and state both epistemologically conceivable and, for many Indonesians, ethically imperative.

At the heart of all these developments has been a decades-long shift in popular understandings of religion, which here in Indonesia is referred to as *agama*. The shift has involved a movement away from the capacious plurality of practices recognized as religion during the first years of the republic to a narrower, more standardized, and elite-authorized range of ritual and doctrinal forms. The phenomenon of the narrowing and formalization of religion in modern societies is a familiar one in comparative studies of religion and politics, and, as will become clearer later, the process is not by any means peculiar to Muslim-majority societies (Dressler and Mandair 2011; Masuzawa 2005; Picard and Madinier 2011). However, in Muslim-majority lands, one of the most widely remarked features of the change has been a turning away from the disparate variety of practices that comprised Islamic observance in earlier times – Sufi mysticism, localized Muslim traditions, and the refined Muslim etiquette and aesthetic forms known as *adab* – to an Islam reconstructed so as to prioritize jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and state-enacted "Islamic law" (Ahmed 2016; Peletz 1998, 2020; Rozehnal 2019; Salvatore 2016:124–5). In its more pronounced expressions, and as is the case in

neighboring Malaysia, this reconceptualization of Islam in legalistic terms brings with it what the scholar Tamir Moustafa has described as "the judicialization of religion" (Moustafa 2018a, 2018b).

This chapter will show that a narrower and more legalistic understanding of Islam is part of the story in modern Indonesia. Interestingly, however, it has been the lesser part. In particular, the reconfiguration of religion has primarily involved not greater emphasis on Islamic law but elite-authorized standards for Islamic worship, education, and public morality (cf. Peletz 2020). Elsewhere (Hefner 2011a), and drawing directly on Indonesian uses of the term (Ind., *agamasisasi* or *agamasasi*; see Humaedi 2013; Hasyim 2014), I have described the general features of this change as the "religionization" of popular understandings and practices of Islam. The latter term was first introduced into Indonesian studies by the anthropologist Sven Cederroth (Cederroth 1996) and further developed by Leena Avonius in her Ph.D. research on the island of Lombok (Avonius 2004). However, today the term is widely used in Indonesia itself, both by scholars of religion and by minority activists uncomfortable with majoritarian trends in society.

Religionization has long had an important effect on this country's religious traditions. In the 1970s and 1980s, Tengger Javanese Hindus in the mountains of East Java struggled to reconstruct their popular Saivite traditions in a manner consistent with Ministry of Religion guidelines on Hinduism; these required the reformulation of local practices in a manner consistent with a scripturalist and monotheistic understanding of religion (Hefner 1985; cf. Ramstedt 2004). Among the Karo Batak of North Sumatra during these same years, the practitioners of local ancestral and guardian spirit cults were pressed to bring their traditions into conformity with similarly officialized models of religion (Steedly 1993; see also Aragon 2000). John Bowen (1993, 2003) has described similar processes of formalization and standardization among the Muslim Gayo in the Aceh highlands on the island of Sumatra. Their ritual practices long regarded as authentically Islamic have come to be redefined as "custom" rather than "religion." Mirjam Künkler has provided a richly comparative optic on the process as well (Künkler 2014; see also Sezgin and Künkler 2014).

As these examples suggest, processes of religionization and "religion-making" are the familiar features of the processes that unfold when local religions are reconstructed under the influence of state and societal authorities.[1] It was in this spirit too that the historian of Indonesia, Merle Ricklefs (2012), summarized the changes taking place in religious affairs in Java over the past century. Rather than religionization, however, Ricklefs referred to these changes as examples of a generic process of "Islamization." One drawback of the latter phrase is that it is often assumed to imply that religious change in question has primarily to do with the recovery and implementation of invariant features of Islam, rather than the construction and reconstruction of an entity that involves an ongoing and highly contingent articulation of multiple currents of knowledge and power. As the anthropologist Ismail Fajrie Alatas has observed, "Islam does not simply

radiate from the 'central lands,' but instead is perpetually formed in between heterogeneous cultures" (Alatas 2021:6). As Peletz (2020) has similarly demonstrated in his study of Islamic courts in Malaysia, Islamization is in fact not a singular process nor one that is uniform or everywhere scripturally governed; it varies greatly in its epistemologies, normativities, and genealogies. Nor are the processes at its heart part of "a premade universal project" grounded on a uniform and "culturally purified . . . Islamic normativity" (Alatas 2021:11). They are always and everywhere influenced by highly varied models of governance, religiosity, and moral living.

However diverse its influences, the consequences of religionization here in modern Indonesia have been far-reaching. Among Muslims, the process has served to marginalize traditions of knowledge and practice once regarded by scholars and lay believers as authentic Islamic traditions (Beatty 1999, 2009; Daniels 2017a; Feener 2013; Sakai 1999). However, the process has also inspired challenges and countercurrents. In particular, and in the aftermath of the post-Suharto era's programs of far-reaching decentralization, some proponents of nonreligionized traditions have reasserted a right to uphold their legacy ways, often under the rubric of "indigenous religions" (*agama leluhur*) or "spiritual traditions" (Ind., *kepercayaan*; see Li 2014; Maarif 2017; Maarif et al. 2019). No less remarkably, these same pluralizing trends in the religious field have given rise to supporting initiatives on the part of some of the country's major Muslim organizations. These have included those initiated in the 2010s by the leadership of Nahdlatul Ulama and the inclusivist wing of the Muhammadiyah to defend an Indonesian variety of multireligious citizenship and to promote diversity-accommodating reforms in Islamic law (Chapter 7; Burhani 2018; Lohlker 2021; Muhammadiyah 2015; Staquf 2019).

In this chapter, then, I examine the political and epistemological background to state policies and societal understandings of religion in general and Islam in particular in modern Indonesia. The case study is an Indonesian illustration of contentions over the boundaries and categories of religion that are widespread in the late-modern world. The American sociologist, Philip Gorski, has aptly referred to such disputes as "'classification struggles' over the dominant principle of vision and division' that governs relations between the religious and political fields" (Gorski 2017:51). Drawing on the model of historical institutionalism in sociology, Gorski – like Ahmet Kuru (2019a) in his comparative study of Islamic societies – emphasizes that such struggles are not the generalized effect of a uniform process of "modernization." They are instead the highly contingent effect of "fundamental renegotiations of social and economic policy" that take place "during periods of acute political crisis" (Gorski 2017:50; see also Künkler and Shankar 2018). These critical junctures put in place policy regimes and social assemblages that "once established, often exhibit high levels of 'path dependency' – that is, they are subject to incremental change, but only within narrow bounds" (ibid.). Such critical junctures are also often marked by the ascendance of "'distributional coalitions' that unite religious and political actors in favor of a particular policy regime," often to

the detriment of less powerful coalitions and the models of religiosity to which they subscribe (Gorski 2017:51; Kuru 2009, 2019a).

Contentions of this sort have long been at the heart of the refiguration of religious traditions in modern Indonesia. "The New Order that lasted . . . from 1966 to 1998 made the control of categories part of its state-building policies" (Bowen 2005:153). The regime did so nowhere more insistently than with regard to the category of religion (Beatty 1999; Daniels 2009; Kim 1996; Picard 2011; Rozehnal 2019). In the more open and democratic atmosphere of the *Reformasi* era, these disputes have not only continued but intensified. Now they unfold, however, not under the control of a confidently hegemonic state but in an open, competitive, and highly commercialized society where some among the state elite appear "more receptive to societal pressures" (Buehler 2016). The pressures include those having to do with the question of which among Indonesia's many religious traditions the state should regard as legitimate and which it should disregard, marginalize, or reconstruct.

Religionization in Comparative Perspective

Religionization or, as it is known in Indonesian, *agamasisasi* or *agamasasi* (cf. Avonius 2004; Cederroth 1996; Hasyim 2014), refers to the reconstruction of supernaturally oriented rituals and doctrines so as to endow them with the characteristics that state and/or societal authorities associate with an appropriately modern and officially legible "religion." Although some contemporary analysts have assumed that the state always plays the dominant role in promoting religionization, the comparative evidence indicates that the relative balance of state and societal forces in religionization programs varies. In Muslim-majority countries like Pakistan, the strength and autonomy of madrasa-based social movements have ensured that processes of standardization and officialization have been less definitively governed by state authorities alone than by complex movements of religious reform emanating from across the state-society divide (Chatterji, Blom Hansen, and Jaffrelot 2019; Zaman 2002). By contrast, in Egypt during the first decades of national independence, the sheer pervasiveness of state institutions guaranteed that the most dramatic reforms in the religious field showed the hand of state authorities more than societally based actors (Wickham 2002; Starrett 1998). In a similar manner, and to shift briefly to a different religious tradition, Theravada Buddhism in Thailand from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries underwent a series of far-reaching reforms. The most consequential were initiated under the direct supervision of state authorities intent on harnessing a reformed variety of Theravada Buddhism to a centrally governed project of nation-building (Scott 2009:61, 64). During this same period, however, the Thai state largely ignored cultic ritual of a non-Buddhist nature, regarding it as "nonreligious." As a result of the latter policy, activities like spirit mediumship, prosperity-oriented rituals, and Chinese Taoist temples were left unregulated and thus "free to develop and evolve into fascinating

new forms" (Jackson 2022:109). As both Volker Gottowik and Michel Picard have noted, compared to Thailand, the full religious field in Indonesia has been subject to a significantly greater measure of religionizing control (Gottowik 2014:18; Picard 2011:2).

As these examples show, processes of religionization reform have figured prominently in the reconstruction of many religious traditions around the modern world, including among Hindus in India (Hansen 1999; Jaffrelot 2021; Sezgin and Künkler 2014); Theravada Buddhists in Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka (ICG 2017; Jackson 2022; Keyes 2016); and Christian orthodox communities in Eastern Europe (Künkler and Shankar 2018). The pervasiveness of the process has led some anthropologists and scholars of comparative religion to link the process to the modern "invention" of the category of religion (Asad 1993, 2003; Madsen 2010; Masuzawa 2005; Scott 2009; van der Veer 1994). Notwithstanding the cross-national pervasiveness of the phenomenon, however, scholars have yet to reach a consensus on just what religionization involves and what political forces drive it.

Scholarly discussions of the process have nonetheless evolved over time with reference to certain theoretical landmarks. Inspired by the pathbreaking writings of the anthropologist Talal Asad (Asad 1983, 1986, 1993, 2003), some of the earlier analysts of religionization assumed that, whatever its precise social drivers, the process has led growing numbers of people around the world to subscribe to an understanding of religion that resembles "a modern, privatised Christian one because . . . it emphasises the priority of a belief as a state of mind" (Asad 1983:247; cf. Mahmood 2005). Asad based his privatization thesis on a related premise: that the universalization of this "Protestant" concept of religion was linked to the global ascendance of the political doctrine of secularism in projects of nation-state making around the world.

Secularism, Asad argued, first "arose in modern Euro-America"; it involved not just a "separation of religious from secular institutions in government" but "new concepts of 'religion,' 'ethics,' and 'politics,' and new imperatives associated with them" (Asad 2003:1). Underlying all these novel constructs, Asad argued, was the Enlightenment notion of *citizenship*. For Asad, citizenship as a mode of governance is "defined . . . by what is common to all its members" (2003:173), to the exclusion of all that is not, including anything religious. In other words, Asad argued, citizenship requires that the human subject be stripped of any and all traces of the "differentiating practices of the self . . . articulated through class, gender, and religion" (2003:5). In keeping with this purifying ambition, policies informed by citizenship ideals must compel "religion, as concept and practice, to remain within prescribed limits" so as to allow "the transcendent power of the secular state [to] secure liberty of belief and expression" (Asad 2003:221). The result is that however varied their histories, religions in a world of (secular) nation-states all tend to become "Protestant-like" – in the sense that, according to Asad, their core reality is reconstructed to center on matters of private personal belief rather than public practice or the general good.

Asad is certainly right to highlight the role of states and nation-making in transforming religion and secularity in the modern age (cf. Casanova 1994, 2011; McLeod 2007; van der Veer 2001; Weller 1999).[2] However, the assumption that religion in modern times has everywhere been reconfigured so as to be *private and belief-based* rather than public and performative appears empirically questionable. The characterization overlooks the diverse array of regimes for the management of religion-state-society relations that have emerged in different countries in modern times, including those in the West. The majority of these governance regimes involve not religion's privatization but country-specific formulations of *public* religion (Casanova 1994; Fox 2008; Stepan 2011). Indeed, in most nations of the world in modern times, "religion has in fact never been excluded from the public sphere," and its influence in many national settings has actually grown rather than diminished in recent decades (Künkler and Shankar 2018:29; see also Casanova 1994; Gorski 2017:51; Martin 1978, 2002). It is for this reason too that in our late modern age political theologies abound – and in many nations have actually grown in public influence rather than declined (De Vries and Sullivan 2007).

Rather than privatizing religion, then, the more widespread characteristic of religious governance in modern nation-states has involved state officials designating a privileged few among the country's religious traditions as partners in the state's project of nationhood and citizen-making, while excluding or stigmatizing others. As Ahmet Kuru (2009) has demonstrated in his comparative study of modern secularisms, the pattern of Protestant "quasi-establishment" that emerged in the United States over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries offers a striking illustration of this trend. Ratified in 1791, the First Amendment to the Constitution had enjoined Congress to "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." However, from the 1810s to 1860s a Protestant-based religious revival that came to be known as the Second Great Awakening swept the young republic; its effect was to lower considerably the wall of separation between religion and state (Casanova 2011:255; Haselby 2015). "Protestant influence encompassed the entire public realm of education and religious instruction, and it extended to the mass media and to societies and movements for moral and social reform"; it included, for example, federal support for Protestant missions to Native Americans and Southern slaves (Kuru 2009:84; see also Monsma and Soper 1997:113–26).

A similar practice of state favoritism toward certain religions combined with the marginalization of others has been the norm in modern European projects of nation-making. Although today "there is no single European pattern" (McLeod 2007:9), *public* religion was a key feature of nation-making and civic identity in most of the countries of modern Western Europe from the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries (Künkler and Shankar 2018; McLeod 2003:4–5; Stepan 2011). No European country followed the formula outlined in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution with its stipulated separation of religion and state (see Casanova 2011:55). On the contrary, European countries treated and today still treat one or

several "national" religions as preferred public institutions. They do so moreover not merely symbolically but in materially significant ways. Almost one half of European Union countries provide state funding for clergy affiliated with state-recognized religions. More than one-third collect special taxes to support these same state-recognized religions. No fewer than one in five still has a fully "established" religion of state (Stepan 2011:117; Fox 2008).

If we extend comparisons like these beyond the West, the pervasiveness of this pattern whereby the state extends favors to one or several religions while neglecting or marginalizing others is all the more striking. In an analysis of state-religion-society relations in 152 countries (based on a 2002 data set), the political scientist Jonathan Fox determined that a full 22% of the total have a "state" religion. State policies in an *additional* 66% of the 152 countries in his survey favor one or several religions in a significant and inequitable way (Fox 2006b:558). In a follow-up study of state-society-religion relations in forty Christian-majority democracies in Europe, the Americas, and Asia, Fox discovered that "40% of all Christian democracies, including 42.8% of Western democracies, in some way supported a single religion more than they supported all others. . . . An additional 35% of these states favored *some* [typically mainline Christian] religions over others" (Fox 2012:783). The favoritism operative in examples like these is not merely symbolic; it is fiscal and material. Beyond the 22% of today's Christian-majority countries that recognize an official religion, an additional 63.3% provide financial aid to select religious schools; 42.5% provide salary supports for clergy; 33.3% fund religious organizations directly from the state budget; and an additional 27.3% collect taxes on behalf of state-recognized religions (2012:80). Rather than privatization, the pattern seen in these data is one in which the state favors or privileges one or several dominant religions while marginalizing those seen as minority-based or otherwise unimportant to the nation-making project.

Fox summarizes his findings with two additional observations, both relevant for the present book's effort to situate citizenship and religious recognition in Indonesia in a comparative context. First, if we define the separation of religion and state as "no government support for religion and no government interference in the religious practices of both the majority and minority religions in state" (Fox 2006b:538), there is just one country in the world that hews in legal principle to that model, and that is the twenty-first-century United States. Contrary to a common opinion in U.S. policy circles, not a single country elsewhere follows the American model. The second point is that the fact that any given state involves itself in the recognition and regulation of religions is not necessarily proof of secularist elites' commanding hegemony, as some scholars of comparative politics and religion have argued (Mahmood 2005; Shakman Hurd 2015:11). Rather, "government restriction and regulation of minority religions is often a sign of the dominant religion's influence in a state." Fox makes an additional observation relevant to the Indonesian case I discuss later. "In other cases, this regulation is the outcome of government and religious institutions being intertwined, which results in the two

mutually influencing each other" (Fox 2006b:538). Herein originates what Künkler and Shankar (2018:14) have aptly described as the "differential burdening" of religion, in which state policies operate by "privileging certain [religious] groups and dis-privileging others."

In sum, as Ahmet Kuru and the late Alfred Stepan observed, rather than being governed by "fixed normative models" (Stepan 2011; Kuru 2009) based on a globally hegemonic secularist discourse, state-society-religion arrangements around the world today assume a variety of forms. The variation demonstrates that these arrangements are the product of not an all-powerful secularist discourse but "conjunctural, socially constructed, political arrangements" between state officials and the dominant classes and groupings in society. Together these path-dependent coalitions collaborate in such a manner as to ensure that the state extends recognition to one or several dominant religions while excluding or marginalizing others (Stepan 2011:114; Künkler and Shankar 2018).

As will become clear in the remainder of this chapter, the collaboration of state officials with dominant religious groupings has long been the operative pattern here in Indonesia. In particular, since the establishment of the republic in 1945, Muslim organizations have sought to embed themselves in state agencies and in particular within the powerful MORA (est. 1946). They have done so not with the aim of returning Indonesia to some golden-age Muslim utopia but on the basis of the sincere conviction that a specific variety of religious identities and practices must figure in any proper practice of national citizenship. As Michael Feener has observed in the special province of Aceh, public religion in that region did not undercut but was "complementary to modernizing aspirations of discipline, strength, and economic prosperity" (Feener 2013:306). As Sami Zubaida has similarly observed with regard to the Egypt-based Ottoman modernizer, Muhammad Ali, a key feature of modernization in that country was that the state sought to create pious subjects (Zubaida 2003). In Thailand too, the retention of traditions of religion and hierarchy has been central to the country's national and capitalist development (Jackson 2022:65). In these and many other cases, the profession of a state-recognized variety of religiosity has been seen as a requisite feature of both national identity and modern citizenship (see also Jaffrelot 2021).

In the aftermath of the religious resurgence of the late New Order, elite and middle-class citizens across Indonesia have come to subscribe to similarly religionized ideas. Many have welcomed efforts by state officials and societal elites to reform and standardize Indonesia's faith traditions. Notwithstanding this seeming consensus, disputes have continued over just which among Indonesia's hundreds of religious and spiritual traditions should be recognized as "religion" and what traits most qualify a tradition for that designation (Aragon 2000; Feener 2013:306; Ropi 2012). No less important, some of the most serious challenges to religionizing policies have come not from the country's minuscule community of secularist liberals but from the ranks of pluralist-minded Muslim intellectuals and activists

uneasy with efforts to press popular religiosity into an officialized mold (Maarif et al. 2019).

The Invention of Modern Indonesian Religion

Contrary to the widespread view that modern religions have everywhere been redefined in an ostensibly "Protestant," private, and belief-based manner, then, the coevolution of religion and nation-making around the modern world has more commonly resulted in the privileged recognition of some religions and the marginalization or non-recognition of others (see also Ali 2019). In the early years of the Indonesian republic, not just Muslim but the majority of Christian leaders were reluctant to go along with proposals that all of the country's faith traditions deserve to be recognized as religions. Although this reluctance has diminished with the growth of cosmopolitan approaches to comparative religious studies in Indonesian universities, including the country's State Islamic Universities (UIN/IAIN; see Chapters 1 and 5; Lukens-Bull 2013; Makin 2017a, 2017b), the dominant current in the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) has long been to reserve the category of "religion" (*agama*) for those traditions that fulfill criteria more specific and exclusive than performative interaction with some supernatural being alone.

Thus, for example, in clarifications issued by MORA officials in 1952, the criteria for recognizing a particular ethico-religious tradition as a "religion" (*agama*) were said to include the following: the religion's acknowledgment of a prophet or founding seer; the transmission and study of a canonical scripture (*kitab*) or holy book; a standardized corpus of ritual practices and beliefs, knowledge, and performance deemed incumbent on all believers (thus implying some degree of standardized religious education); and a clear and consistent differentiation of non-religious "custom" (*adat*) from sacral religion (cf. Aragon 2000; Atkinson 1987; Cederroth 1996; Picard 2011). As the German anthropologist Martin Ramstedt has observed, the cumulative effect of these regulations was that "the Indonesian state . . . reified and institutionalised 'religion' as a monothestic, revealed, and scriptural world religion" (Ramstedt 2019:264). An additional expression of this religionizing ambition was that in 1955 the Ministry declared that for a religion to qualify for state recognition it should enjoy a significant international membership rather than being limited to a single region or locale. This last criterion was introduced so as to disqualify the dozens of indigenous religions still practiced in Indonesia in the early independence period (Atkinson 1987; Hefner 1985; Maarif et al. 2019).

It is important to recognize that these criteria for categorizing and recognizing "religion" were not carryovers from the colonial era or from nineteenth-century Dutch Protestant missionaries. From the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, the Dutch administration that occupied Indonesia until 1942 was much less hesitant to interfere in religious affairs than it had been in the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. In particular, from the mid-nineteenth century onward the colonial state changed course and welcomed the establishment of

Christian missions; it did so with the express aim of impeding the advance of Islam into areas of the archipelago not yet Muslim (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008; Kruithof 2014; Laffan 2011:101–22). By the late-colonial period too, the classical Calvinist view of predestination had given way to a "modern" theology that combined cultural evolutionism with beliefs in European racial superiority (Fasseur 1994). One especially popular view was that associated with the "degenerationist" model of world religions popular in certain European circles in the nineteenth century. This theology explained that prior to Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, all of humankind "possessed a certain knowledge of God. But because of man's disobedience to God's commandments, his knowledge had diminished and his moral level declined" (Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:145). It was widely recognized that religions closer in origins to Christianity, like Islam, had degenerated less than others, and as a result they retained more trace elements from God's original guidance. Others, however, like the practitioners of small-scale local religions, preserved little of the primal message, although here and there "sparks of the original knowledge were still to be found" (ibid.). As Aritonang and Steenbrink have wryly observed, however Euro-supremacist this view, at the very least it distinguished missionary visions of the other "from the hard-core racism which maintained that other races were unable to ascend to the level reached by Europeans" (ibid.). Responsive to racializing trends in Western Europe, the latter, white-supremacist (and largely secularist) view would become dominant in European circles in the East Indies during the final years of the colonial period (Gouda 1995; Stoler 1989). But this view of religion had little influence in Indonesian nationalist circles.

Not surprisingly, however, the state's concern with the definition and regulation of religion shifted dramatically in the aftermath of the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies and collapse of the Dutch colony in March 1942. Sensing a political opportunity, the Japanese broke with Dutch colonial policies and reached out to Muslims in large organizations like NU in an effort to rally support for the Japanese cause. The same ambition underlay the Japanese military administration's establishment of an Office for Religious Affairs (*Shumubu*) in 1942 (Benda 1983:111–19). In late 1943, the Japanese also established a Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims (*Majlis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia*/Masyumi), which further enhanced traditionalist Muslim influence in government affairs and prepared the way for the formation of Japanese-sponsored Muslim militias in the war's final months (Benda 1983; Ricklefs 2012:63). In early 1945, as World War II was careening toward its close, Japanese officials concluded that an allied invasion of the Indonesian archipelago was imminent. In the face of this threat, the occupiers sponsored the establishment of an Investigative Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (*Badan Penyelidik Usaha-usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*, BPUPKI). The committee's purpose was to formulate a legal framework for a soon-to-be-declared independent Indonesia. This critical juncture was to bequeath a lasting legacy for state-religion relations in modern Indonesia.

The nationalist leader and future president, Sukarno, was given the responsibility of choosing the committee's sixty-two members. Sukarno took care to invite representatives from all of the independence movement's main ideological currents and appointed a distinguished Javanese aristocrat and nationalist, Dr. Radjiman Wedyodiningrat, to serve as chair. Radjiman had been a member of Indonesia's oldest, quasi-nationalist organization, *Budi Utomo* ("Noble Endeavor"; see Nagazumi 1972; Ricklefs 2007:217–18). Rather more controversially, Radjiman was also a member of the Dutch colony's small but influential Theosophical Society (Kersten 2015:250). The latter association still looms large in the historical memory of many Indonesians of Islamist persuasion, who blame it for having sabotaged their efforts to turn independent Indonesia into an Islamic state. Founded in the Dutch East Indies during the final years of the nineteenth century, the Theosophical Society had a membership that included Europeans, Chinese, and native Indonesians (primarily of aristocratic Javanese background); it also had people from formally separate religious backgrounds, including Christians, Muslims, and Javanese mystics. Not unlike their counterparts in other nations of the world, Indonesia's Theosophists rallied to two convictions: that "God is one, but believers call him by different names" and that all religions share an essential unity and underlying wisdom (Bahri 2017:147; cf. Vickers 2013:83, 122).

The Radjiman Committee held its first meeting at the end of May 1945. On June 1, Sukarno presented the body with a first draft of his *Pancasila* or "Five Principles," which, despite periodic challenges and highly varied interpretations (Cribb 2010; Fachrudin 2018; Ichwan 2012), have remained the official philosophy of state to this day. Sukarno portrayed the Five Principles as his distillation of deeply rooted Indonesian values – something of a secular nationalist counterpart to Islam's *maqasid al-shariah* (Chapters 1 and 7). However, the political philosophy he crafted was in fact a thoroughly modernist and hybrid creation, blending principles from an array of Indonesian and Western traditions (Bourchier 2015:65–73; Vickers 2013:121). In particular, the Pancasila mixed the universalizing doctrines of nationalism and democratic socialism with Abrahamic monotheism. It did so by emphasizing that the Indonesian nation was to be based on not Islam but a unified and national-state (*kebangsaan*), internationalist humanism (*peri-kemanusiaan*), democracy modeled on Indonesian traditions of consensus and consultation (*permusyawaratan*), social justice (*kesejahteraan sosial*), and recognition of a singular and almighty God (*ketuhanan*). In the version of the Pancasila eventually incorporated into constitutional documents, the last principle, with its stipulation that the state is based on recognition of a monotheistic God, was put into first position and thus identified as the foundation for the others. This repositioning was to prove deeply consequential.

Although committee delegates approved adoption of the Pancasila with acclamation, over the days that followed representatives from various Muslim organizations decried the committee's failure to recognize either Islam or shariah among the new republic's foundations. Sukarno responded to this objection by

organizing a smaller subcommittee ("the committee of nine") from within the ranks of the Radjiman Committee. He tasked this new subcommittee with recrafting the declaration with the idea that its revised principles were to be put in place as the preamble to a constitution to be completed in the coming weeks. The subcommittee included representatives from both Islamic and secular nationalist associations. On June 22, 1945, the subcommittee presented its compromise formulation, which was to serve as the preamble to the soon-to-be-released constitution.

The proposed preamble included a lightly revised version of Sukarno's Pancasila with *ketuhanan/recognition of God Almighty* now moved into initial position. No less significant, this first principle was now supplemented with seven additional words, which subsequently came to be known as the "Jakarta Charter" (*Piagam Jakarta*). The latter made clear that the Indonesian State is to be based not only on recognition of a singular and almighty God but on "the obligation [for the state and adherents of Islam] to carry out Islamic law" (*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*). The revision not only made belief in God the nation's first philosophical principle but also implied that the state would differentiate Muslims from non-Muslims for the purposes of enforcing Islamic law (see Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:189; Lev 1966:263–77). The Jakarta Charter thus laid the foundation for what has remained a point of fierce contention to this day: whether the state is to uphold a model of universal citizenship inclusive of all recognized religions or promote a principle of citizenship differentiated along religious lines (Hefner 2018).

Although agreement seemed at hand, the wording for prescribing the precise relationship of religion and state was still not fully formulated. During the BPUPKI's second plenary session, which began in mid-July 1945, the place of religion in the state again became the focus of heated debate. This time it was Christian delegates who came forward to protest. They objected to the Jakarta Charter's nod to shariah implementation and warned that inclusion of any shariah mandate would provoke unrest in Christian areas of eastern Indonesia, as well as in those Muslim regions, like West Sumatra, where customary arrangements in matters of inheritance (among other things) depart from conventional *fiqh* norms. Rejecting these arguments, Wahid Hasyim, a leading Nahdlatul Ulama scholar (and father of Abdurrahman Wahid, the third president of the republic, and a renowned Muslim pluralist; see Chapter 1 and Barton 2002), argued that the Jakarta charter still did not go far enough in recognizing Islam's place in the new state. In particular, he argued, the constitution should make clear that Islam is the religion of state, and any candidate for the presidency must be a native-born (*pribumi*) Muslim.

Hasyim's objections were eventually put aside, and work continued on the drafting of the constitution under the leadership of the Dutch-educated lawyer and scholar of customary (*adat*) law, Dr. Supomo. Like Radjiman, Supomo had been a leader in Budi Utomo and was also a Theosophist. Influenced by integralist political thought popular during these years in right-wing circles in Europe, Supomo also subscribed to a corporatist model of the Indonesian nation, premised on a

romantic but deeply hierarchical vision of rulers and subjects (Bourchier 2015:2–4, 27–30; Boland 1982:19; Feith and Castles 1970:188). Not surprisingly in light of his integralist views, Supomo was also a staunch opponent of proposals to make Islamic law the foundation for the state. Notwithstanding Supomo's reservations, the drafters of the constitution managed to reach an agreement with the Jakarta Charter still in place.

The new agreement was officially accepted on August 7, 1945, when the successor body to the BPUPKI, known as the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (*Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia*, PPKI), met under the direction of Sukarno and the republic's future vice president, Mohammad Hatta. Eleven days later, and one day after the August 17 declaration of independence, the PPKI approved the draft constitution and declared Sukarno and Hatta president and vice president, respectively. Before they did so, however, Hatta – a pious Muslim from a well-regarded Minangkabau family but also a staunch social democrat and opponent of proposals to establish an Islamic state (Bourchier 2015:76; Feith and Castle 1970:32) – met in private with Muslim delegates to the PPKI. He explained that a Japanese naval officer in eastern Indonesia had informed Sukarno and Hatta that if the Jakarta Charter were not removed from the preamble, leaders from largely Christian areas of eastern Indonesia threatened to secede from the republic. In his memoirs, Vice President Hatta recalls that the Muslim delegates reluctantly agreed to the deletion of the seven words with their shariah mandate and did so in the interest of national unity. However, another reason Muslim delegates agreed to the compromise is that they were confident that national elections would be held within the next year or two and that, in a Muslim-majority Indonesia, Muslim political parties would inevitably prevail. Having won the election, these parties would then be in a position to amend the constitution in a manner allowing state implementation of Islamic law.

As it turned out, national elections were delayed and would not be held until 1955 (Feith 1957). And in those elections and all held since, the proponents of state-enforced shariah have discovered to their surprise that the majority of Indonesian voters do not place state-enforced shariah at the top of their list of electoral priorities (see Chapters 1 and 2; Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018:92). Campaigns for state implementation of Islamic law were nonetheless to revive several decades later with the return to democracy in the post-Suharto *Reformasi* era (see Chapter 7).

Recognition and Marginalization

Buried within the 1945 Constitution were several additional clauses that, rather than settling matters with regard to religion and state, opened the door to greater contention. Foremost among these was the Constitution's Article 29, which is the passage that most extensively addresses matters of freedom of religion and conscience. In the second draft of the constitution (the version incorporated into what

has come to be known as the 1945 Constitution and which, with amendments, serves as the Indonesian constitution to this day), the article affirms that the state "guarantees (*menjamin*) the freedom (*kemerdekaan*) of each inhabitant to profess his or her religion (*agamanya*) and to worship (*beribadat*) according to his or her religion or spiritual belief [*kepercayaan*]." Although the phrasing at first seems to echo the United Nations' Universal Declaration on Human Rights, a closer look reveals it to be a significantly more "Indonesian" construct.

Although the term has always been subject to diverse interpretations, today in state circles in Indonesia the second reality referenced in Article 29, *kepercayaan* or "spiritual beliefs" (or, less literally, "spiritual traditions"), is typically reserved for those categories of ethico-religious heritage that are assumed by their adherents to involve spiritual disciplines but that state officials regard as falling short of what is required to qualify as "religion." Not surprisingly, the adherents of these traditions often take a different view on the matter. Many regard the traditions they observe as "religions" (*agama*) even if state officials and adherents of state-recognized religions decline to recognize them as such (see, e.g., Cederroth 1981, 1996; Hefner 1985:246; Ramstedt 2004; Schiller 1997; Volkman 1985).

For most of the Indonesian republic's history, the distinction between *agama*/religion and *kepercayaan*/beliefs/spirituality has been the bedrock for state policies on religion. In official usage the term "*kepercayaan*" refers to either of two varieties of spiritual tradition: ancestral or indigenous religions (*agama leluhur*) long practiced by Indonesia's small-scale communities (Aragon 2000; Atkinson 1987; Maarif 2017; Maarif et al. 2019) or new mystical associations and movements. The latter include the many mystical groups still popular in Java and a few other areas of the archipelago, and that several decades ago were commonly referred to as *kebatinan* (from the Indonesian and Arabic term, *batin*, inner, interior experience; see Geertz 1960a:232; Picard 2011:12–13; Stange 1980, 1986).

Inasmuch as in official circles today *kepercayaan* traditions enjoy weaker legal standing than state-recognized religions, it at first seems curious that the term "*kepercayaan*" was inserted into Article 29 of the Indonesian constitution, thereby encouraging some observers to assume that *kepercayaan* should be accorded legal protections on par with those of *agama*/religions. That this phrasing prevailed was in no small part the result of the handiwork of one other man on the Wadjiman committee: Wongsonegoro (1897–1978; see Husein 2005:74; Stange 1986:88). In the early independence era, Wongsonegoro was one of Indonesia's most distinguished nationalist leaders; he was also the single most influential *kebatinan* mystical leader in the country's history. He played a central role in the BPUPKI committee, served as governor of Central Java during the independence war (1945–9), was Minister of Interior for the last four months of 1949, and from 1951 to 1952 was Minister of the resolutely anti-Islamist Ministry of Education and Culture. The premier Western historian of *kebatinan* mysticism in modern Indonesia, Paul D. Stange (1986:89), has aptly referred to Wongsonegoro as "the father of the political mystical movement during the fifties."

Years ago, when I conducted research among Javanist Muslims and Hindus in the province of East Java, I was surprised to discover that senior villagers active in local spirituality (*kepercayaan*) movements in the late 1950s had on several occasions hosted Wongsonegoro in their remote upland villages. The villagers recounted that Wongsonegoro and colleagues from the Ministry of Education made several visits to their hill communities as part of an effort to build a broad-based coalition of mystics and adherents of indigenous religions in East and Central Java (Hefner 1987a, 1987b). The express purpose of the coalition, villagers were told, was to bring about changes in state policies so that the spiritual traditions practiced by all of these groups would be put legally on par with state-recognized religions. The campaign had for the most part come to naught, largely because by the late 1950s popular politics in the East Javanese countryside had shifted away from religious issues toward the escalating rivalry between Nahdlatul Ulama and local supporters of the PKI (Fealy and McGregor 2010; Hefner 1990; Mortimer 1974:277, 296; Ricklefs 2012:107). Nonetheless these village accounts offer one more reminder that, by the mid-1950s, the question of how the state should recognize *kepercayaan* movements was no longer just an obscure topic of bureaucratic discussion. The issue had come to figure in fiercely partisan campaigns for the control of the ministries responsible for religious and educational affairs (Ropi 2012).

At the time of these constitutional debates in the 1940s, the insertion of the term "*kepercayaan*" into Article 29's first verse appears to have been a deliberate attempt to take advantage of the term's ambiguous meanings in a manner favorable to *kepercayaan* interests. Although in those years many Indonesians already understood *kepercayaan* as a variety of spiritual tradition less legitimate than religions/*agama*, a smaller number of Indonesians heard the term as referring to *both* Indonesia's indigenous and/or mystical traditions *and* the personal and/or subjective manner in which an individual experiences his or her religion, be it Islam, Christianity, or some other ethico-religious tradition. In this latter usage, the term "*kepercayaan*" might be more aptly translated as "religious conviction" or "personal religious experience" thereby implying that there is another dimension to religion that must be protected beyond that of a particular religion's more authorized and public forms (cf. Geertz 1960a:232). In other words, this understanding of *kepercayaan* encourages citizens not just to recognize another category of spiritual tradition but to realize that even individuals within the same religious community can experience their faith in different ways, and this plurality within religion should also be recognized and protected by the state.

In an important reanalysis of heretofore unpublished records from the May 1945 meetings of the BPUPKI independence preparatory committee, Zainal Abidin Bagir of Gadjah Mada University discovered in 2019 that transcripts from the meetings indicate that Wongsonegoro pressed for the inclusion of the term "*kepercayaan*" in the constitution on just these plurality-within-religiosity grounds. On the basis of his study of these documents, Bagir concludes that Wongsonegoro intended *kepercayaan* to refer not just to a category of spirituality distinct from "religion"

(*agama*) but to "the manner in which one manifests one's religiosity," including where the experience in question differs from that conventionally recognized in a particular religious community. The inclusion of the phrase, then, was intended to underscore that "the expressions of a religion are not singular or uniform" (Bagir 2020:43). Inasmuch as one subscribes to this plurality-within-religion view, state efforts to enforce a standardized practice of religion – like those that might be required if the state were to enforce Islamic law – could be seen as threatening an individual's right to her personal religious experience and thereby violating constitutionally enshrined religious freedoms.

It goes without saying that the fact that the 1945 Constitution can be interpreted in this pluralism-affirming way did not settle the matter. In fact, this was just the opening salvo in a contest over how to know and recognize religion that has continued to this day. With the establishment of the MORA on January 3, 1946, the questions of just what qualifies as religion and which traditions of ritual and belief the state should recognize as religions were no longer just academic matters. Henceforth, the issues were to be debated in parliament and invoked in national political campaigns (Boland 1982:105–12; Ropi 2012:2–3). As the issue became the subject of mass contention, hopes for a broad public consensus on Wongsonegoro's plurality-affirming understanding of religious freedom faded.

During the early years of Indonesian independence, even state officials within different government ministries could not agree on the question of how to define religion and which of Indonesia's many spiritual traditions should qualify for that designation. During the first twenty years of the republic's existence, representatives from the Ministry of Culture and Education, disproportionately led by people of a more or less secular nationalist orientation, held their ground against efforts by the NU- and Muhammadiyah-dominated MORA to narrow the range of faith traditions recognized as religions. However, notwithstanding the Education Ministry's best efforts, the MORA's characterization of religion gradually gained ascendance.

In 1952, and in response to inquiries from representatives in the People's National Assembly, officials from the MORA made clear that they were determined not to expand the list of state-recognized religions (or do away with it entirely as a few secular nationalists recommended) but to limit recognition to those spiritual traditions that displayed the trademarks of "true" religion (Hidayah 2012). As noted earlier, the list of requisite characteristics included revering a prophet or seer, recognizing a single supreme being, upholding a sacred book or scripture (*kitab*), and performing regularized rituals or worship. In 1961, and once again in response to debates taking place in the National Assembly, the Ministry added a new trait to the list of requirements: that a religion should "be an encompassing way of life with concrete regulations," including the "teaching about the oneness of God" (*ketuhanan*; Hidayah 2012:128). In all these regards, one should note, the criteria for recognizing a religion drew not on Protestant privatist prototypes as some theorists of modern religion might argue but on Muslim notions of religion as *din* – which is to say "the obligations and prescriptions laid down by God," inclusive of "all the

Laws which God has promulgated to guide man to his final end, the submission to these laws (thus to God), and the practice of them" (Gardet 2012).

Although these debates were informed by the Muslim concept of *din*, it is important to note that they also set aside several other definitional distinctions long at the heart of Muslim legal and scriptural commentaries on religion. In particular, the constitutionally enshrined binary of "religion" and "spiritual belief" is *not* drawn directly from the Qur'an, the Sunna of the Prophet, or classical Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). In one sense this absence may seem surprising because in the early decades of the twentieth century, senior scholars associated with Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama were already well versed in the categories used in classical *fiqh*/jurisprudence to differentiate Islam from other religions, and these did not recognize any such analytic distinction between "religion" and "spiritual belief." Here again, however, the sources to which Muslim Indonesians looked in constructing their knowledge and practice of religion have always been more diverse and contextual than those of scripture alone. They showed in particular categorical carryovers from Indonesia-specific projects of nation-making and religionization.

The concepts for recognizing religions with which Muslim scholars in Indonesia were and are still today familiar include the categories long discussed in classical Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). These center on "people of the book" (*ahl al-kitab*; Jews, Christians, and others thought to have been the recipients at some point of divine revelation) and the related category of "protected minorities" or *dhimmi* (*ahl ad-dhimma*; Awang 1994; Bulliet 1994:39; Emon 2012:324–7; Friedmann 2003:58–74).

In the interviews that accompanied my two surveys of one thousand Indonesian Muslims in 2006–8 (Chapters 1, 2, 5, and 7), one of the more surprising findings was that, although many *lay* Muslim interviewees were unfamiliar with the jurisprudential category of *dhimmi*, *every* educator I interviewed *was* familiar with the term and knew that it was a key ingredient in classical *fiqh* discourses on non-Muslims. When I asked Muslim educators just what they taught their students about the category of *dhimmi*, the great majority explained that the concept is rarely if ever introduced to students in beginning courses on jurisprudence, since these courses focus on not abstract theoretical matters but practical training relevant for employment in the Department of Religion and other state bureaus. This is to say that most instruction focuses on matters of family law (marriage, divorce, and inheritance), *halal* certification, or Islamic finance (a booming service in the *Reformasi* era). Here, as in so many other instances, the priorities established in Islamic legal education are in the first instance determined not by theoretical questions but by matters relevant for securing employment in the Ministries of Religion and Justice (Feener 2007:219–21; Lindsey 2012:217–51).

By contrast, in most Islamic boarding schools and in *fiqh* courses in Indonesia's State Islamic Colleges and Universities (UIN/IAIN; see Chapter 5), jurisprudential commentaries on *dhimmi* were a regular topic of discussion, coming up in courses on Islamic history as well as *fiqh* classes dealing with politics and social affairs

(*muamalat*). In these courses, I was told (and my discussions with students confirmed), students read numerous commentaries from and about classical Islamic jurisprudence, even though much of it is regarded as obsolescent in Indonesia today. The senior educators also explained to their students that they understood that the category of *dhimmi* was a bitter point of contention in many Muslim circles. Its discussion often pitted Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah scholars opposed to the concept's application in contemporary Indonesia against the smaller community of Islamists who believe that the incorporation of *dhimmi* principles into national legislation is required for Indonesia, consistent with a Muslim-supremacist understanding of differentiated citizenship (see Chapters 4 and 7). Some of the most stalwart promoters of this latter view were in Islamist movements like the Council of Indonesian Mujahidin (*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* [MMI]), a group I discuss in the next chapter. In annual conversations between 2001 and 2016, spokespersons for this organization made clear to me that they regarded the classical teachings on *dhimmi* as an essential and unchanging feature of shariah law and thus "required" (*wajib*) in any comprehensive implementation of Islamic law.

In classical commentaries in the Muslim Middle Ages, the category of *dhimmi* figured centrally in the legal recognition of non-Muslim residents in Muslim-governed polities. Under the terms of classical jurisprudence, *dhimmis* are non-Muslims who are supposed to be accorded a significant measure of protection and autonomy, including the right to profess their faith and organize their religious affairs on their own. However, in legal principle, *dhimmis* receive this dispensation only on the condition that they submit to Muslim rule and pay a special capitation tax known as the *jizya* (Emon 2012:34; Friedmann 2003:37). Jurisprudential commentaries underscored the recognized but second-class standing of *dhimmis* in other ways as well. Some commentaries reference medieval jurisprudential commentaries and stipulate that *dhimmis* are to be barred from service in the military, forbidden from riding horses in the presence of Muslims, required to wear religiously marked dress, and excluded from exercising executive authority over Muslims. Some legal texts make additional stipulations, barring non-Muslims from "fornication" with Muslim women, forbidding the ringing of church bells or the holding of religious processions, and banning the construction of new houses of worship for non-Muslims (Masters 2001:22). It is important to provide a quick comparative reminder here: although Islamic jurisprudence assigns *dhimmis* a decidedly second-class status, the minorities nonetheless enjoyed a larger menu of rights than their non-Christian counterparts in premodern Western Europe. Minorities in most of the latter territory had to rely on patronage deals with local rulers rather than any settled body of religious law to secure a measure of political recognition and protection (Emon 2012:34–6).

In actual historical practice, Muslim rulers' policies with regard to non-Muslims could be more generous than these classical jurisprudential prescriptions imply. For example, Muslim rulers in Mughal India (Richards 1993:39) and the Ottoman

empire (Barkey 2008:51, 88) regularly awarded social and economic privileges to non-Muslim advisors, merchants, community representatives, and military allies that were more extensive in scope than those authorized under the terms of *dhimmi* jurisprudence. In Ottoman lands in particular, Jews and Christians were sometimes appointed to high-ranking offices, and the communities of which they were part enjoyed considerable autonomy in economic affairs (Masters 2001). Christians also served in some of the military units allied with Ottoman battalions, including those involved in campaigns against Christians in the Balkans.

Across the Muslim world, these legacies of governance and recognition with regard to non-Muslims underwent great changes with the dawn of the modern era. With the rise of independence movements committed to modern projects of nation-making, the great majority of Muslim-majority states opted not to incorporate *dhimmi* distinctions into their constitutions and legal systems. Even today, in the aftermath of two generations of heightened Islamic observance and growing calls for the implementation of Islamic law, *dhimmi* restrictions have limited popular purchases. Although eight of some forty-nine Muslim-majority countries identify Islam as the religion of state (Kuru 2019a:39), and the constitutions of nineteen states stipulate that Islamic shariah should be one or the only source of law (Emon 2012:171), few Muslim-majority countries in the early postcolonial period introduced jurisprudential restrictions on *dhimmis* into their founding constitutions or civic legislation.

From the first years of Indonesian independence, the question of religion and citizenship, and in particular whether citizenship should be differentiated in a *dhimmi*-like way, was widely discussed in mainstream Muslim mass organizations like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. As is still very much the case today, scholars from both of these mass organizations were familiar with the *dhimmi* category, but they steered clear of its usage in public pronouncements. Notwithstanding this setting aside of *dhimmi* stipulations, Muslim educators' and officials' use of the religion-belief/*agama-kepercayaan* binary was and is still today not entirely free of what we might call a *dhimmi* shadow. In particular, most Muslim officials in institutions like the MORA understand the religion-belief binary in a way that, even while steering clear of the stark hierarchies of classical jurisprudence, nonetheless preserves a degree of ranked differentiation. The asymmetry in question has to do with the fact that in this usage "religions" (*agama*) are seen as a higher and more authoritative category of religious experience and practice than the lesser traditions known as "spiritual beliefs" (*kepercayaan*).

It is helpful to recall that the distinction between "religion" and "belief" was written into Article 29 of the Constitution without being given a formal or explicit definition and, in the heat of the constitution-writing rush, without much discussion (see Bagir 2020:43). But while activists like Wongsonegoro believed that "spiritual beliefs" are not in any way a lesser species of religiosity, many officials in the Ministry of Religion felt otherwise. Indeed, in 1952, the MORA provided details

on its asymmetrical understanding of "religion" as opposed to "spiritual beliefs" in Ministry of Religion Decree No. 9/1952/Article VI. The declaration stated,

> A current of belief [*kepercayaan*] [is] a dogmatic opinion, which is closely connected to the living tradition of tribes, especially those tribes that are still backward. The core of their belief is everything which has become the customary way of life of their ancestors over time.
>
> *(Ramstedt 2004:9; cf. Hidayah 2012:131; cf. Boland 1982:105–12)*

Although it need not assume so stark a form as it does in this early MORA statement, the value hierarchy implicit in the religion/spiritual belief binary was to remain at the heart of officializing discourses on religion and spiritual beliefs from the early Republic to today. "Religion" in this discourse was an important and necessary ingredient for civilizational progress and citizenship; "*kepercayaan* belief" carried no such modernizing affordances. Over time, the Ministry's asymmetrical view became ascendant among broad portions of the Indonesian public, marginalizing the egalitarian understanding of "religion" and "spiritual belief" upheld by some religious minorities and secular-minded Indonesians (see Kersten 2015:230).

However compelling their underlying logic, the forces promoting this cultural shift in knowledge and practice were, of course, not merely doctrinal. On the contrary, they were entangled with ongoing political struggles over, among other things, the ground rules for nationhood and citizen belonging. These matters had been given special urgency by two of the most contentious culture wars that have raged in Indonesia from the mid-1940s to today. These have to do with, first, the legal standing of indigenous religions and, second, just what state officials should do with the many Indonesians who self-identify as Muslim while practicing nonstandard or syncretic varieties of Islam (Beatty 1999, 2009; Burhani 2018; Geertz 1960a; Hefner 1987a).

Indigenous Religiosity Denied

There was a powerfully political backdrop, then, to these national debates over how to recognize and regulate religion in the first decades of the Republic. The background had to do with what many scholars of Indonesian religions once regarded as the two most distinctive features of Indonesia's religious heritage: the survival into late modern times of ethnically based "local" religions, which in the later *Reformasi* period have come to be known as "ancestral" religions or *agama leluhur* (Maarif et al. 2019); and, second, the pervasiveness of localized varieties of Islam not recognized as authentically Islamic by the country's Sunni scholars but regarded as "Islam" nonetheless by their practitioners.

It was these two sociopolitical realities that, from the 1950s onward, gave special urgency to the efforts of Muslim officials in the MORA and the country's mainline Muslim mass organizations to promote an asymmetrical and hierarchical

understanding of the categories of religion and spiritual belief. In other words, the asymmetrical hierarchy was not just categorical but political, having to do with "'classification struggles' over the dominant principle of vision and division that governs relations between the religious and political fields" (Gorski 2018:51). The binary was intended in particular to justify and accelerate the continuing displacement of the latter varieties of spirituality (*kepercayaan*) by the former (*agama*). This displacement was justified not just on religious grounds but on the basis of widely shared and sincere convictions among many modern Indonesians that a central task of the state is not to maximize individual freedoms but to "build up" and "guide" (*membina*) the citizenry to a proper, civilized, and modern national culture, at the center of which lies a properly religionized profession of religion (Feener 2013; Hefner 1987a; Ricklefs 2012:156; Ropi 2012).

In the early independence era, the religion-belief binary embedded in the 1945 Constitution and favored by Muslim (and some Christian) party activists was not yet widely employed by the many local, tribal, or chiefdom-based societies that had just recently been incorporated into the new Indonesian nation. In those years, there were still hundreds of thousands of Indonesians in interior portions of Sumatra and the central and eastern archipelago who practiced what today are referred to as local or indigenous religions (Aragon 2000; Atkinson 1987; George 1996; Hoskins 1987; Kuipers 1998; Schiller 1997; Smith-Kipp 1993; Tsing 1993:54–5). Although a few of these religions were practiced by ethnic and sub-ethnic minorities in the densely populated interior of Java (Beatty 1999:16, 109; Hefner 1985; Wessing 2016), most of these populations lived in remote inland and forest areas on what used to be known as Indonesia's "outer islands" ("outer," in the sense of outside Java-Bali-Madura). Although never entirely isolated from their Muslim neighbors, these populations had remained sufficiently aloof from the great flow of commerce, people, and religious ideas that transformed the archipelago from the thirteenth century onward as to not be drawn to the profession of Islam or, in eastern Indonesia, Christianity (Lombard 1990; Reid 1993; Robinson 2021).

When referring to their own religious traditions, many of the residents of these non-Islamic hinterlands either ignored the state's religion/belief binary in favor of some indigenous phrasing or referred to their traditions with the same word as did Muslims and Christians, which is to say as an *agama*/religion (see Aragon 2000; Atkinson 1987; Cederroth 1996; Hefner 1985; MacDougall 2005; Picard 2011; Schiller 1997; Tsing 1993). Whatever their preferred terminology, in the early republican era most of these indigenous peoples were convinced that their own spiritual heritages were every bit as deserving of state recognition as Christianity or Islam; most also rejected suggestions that they give up their local traditions for Islam or Christianity. By contrast, most mainline Muslim and Christian leaders in Indonesia were unwilling to extend the title of *agama* to these localized traditions, regarding them, again, as a lesser species of religiosity, better characterized as "beliefs"/*kepercayaan*, if not outright "superstitions" (*takhyul, kurafat*). The hope and the expectation among proponents of a religionized *agama* were that modernist

progress and cultural enlightenment would slowly but surely bring the followers of these backward traditions into proper religious observance and, with it, a modern practice of Indonesian citizenship.

For twentieth-century Muslim scholars and activists, including those affiliated with the proudly nationalist Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia has long been home to a second and even more problematic category of religious community than the smaller number of Indonesians who continue to practice indigenous or local religions (*agama leluhur*). During the first two decades of the republican era in particular, this larger community included the tens of millions of Indonesians who self-identified as Muslim but who subscribed to cosmologies and religious observances at odds with those recognized by mainstream Sunnis, especially those who self-identified as *santri*, that is, Muslim Indonesians who had studied the Islamic sciences at Muslim boarding schools (*pesantren*) or day schools (*madrasas*; see Geertz 1960a:127–30; Hefner 2009; Ricklefs 2006). Dutch missionaries and Orientalist scholars working in Java in the mid-nineteenth century were the first Europeans to take note of these syncretic or otherwise "nonstandard" varieties of Islam (Kruithof 2014:111–21; Ricklefs 2006:89–104). During the first decades after this discovery, the Dutch administration lacked sufficient scholarly familiarity with Islam to appreciate the religious community's breadth or its cultural significance. But the imperatives of colonial expansion were soon to change this.

As the historian Michael Laffan has observed (Laffan 2011:85–121), in the early nineteenth century the academy-based Orientalist scholarship that pioneered the first generation of advanced study of Islam in Western universities was still in its infancy. No less serious, in settings like the Dutch Indies, Orientalist scholars specializing in Islam devoted little attention to localized varieties of Islam. Most instead assumed that *fiqh* textual traditions and "Islamic law" were the measure of a proper profession of Islam. It was for this reason too that Dutch colonial officers heading off for the East Indies in the mid-nineteenth century were given crash courses in Islamic law in their Leiden-based training programs (Laffan 2003:8–10).

With the appointment in 1889 of the renowned Orientalist scholar of Islam, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, as an advisor on Islamic affairs to the Indies government (Bowen 2003:48–9; Kruithof 2014:60; Laffan 2011:75), this latter feature of training policy underwent an abrupt about-face. In the face of *ulama*-coordinated resistance against Dutch colonialism in Aceh, West Java, and other regions, Snouck Hurgronje urged colonial authorities to distinguish "political" aspects of Islam from those he deemed "cultural." He also urged officials to see "orthodox" Muslims and especially those who had studied in Arabia and Egypt and who, not coincidentally, tended to see jurisprudence as central to Islamic observance, as the single greatest threat to European rule. It was Snouck Hurgronje too who first convinced the Dutch authorities that, with the exception of *hajj* pilgrims and others exposed to "Middle Eastern" cultures, most Muslims in the archipelago were unfamiliar with and/or indifferent to *fiqh*-based jurisprudence. In line with this counsel, the colonial government developed policies in the first years of the twentieth century

designed to restrict the implementation of Islamic legal traditions in all Muslim territories except the minority where Islamic law had already been "received" in local Muslim society (Bowen 2003:48–9; Feener 2007:70; Feener and Cammack 2007; Lindsey 2012).

In this context of aggressive colonial advance and growing European anxieties about "orthodox" Muslims, the Christian missionaries who had long been barred from Muslim-majority areas of the Dutch East Indies (Kruithof 2014:14) were finally given the green light to establish schools and missions in a greatly expanded scale. The first steps toward implementing this new policy had been taken in Java in 1848. However, the policy was enacted more aggressively in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, as the Dutch made their final push into as-yet uncolonized portions of the archipelago. In these rapidly changing circumstances, missionaries received basic instruction on Islam and Islamic law prior to being dispatched to the Indies. However, they were now also told that rather than being *fiqh*-observant Muslims, most native Muslims were syncretists at best and thus more suitable candidates for Christian missionizing than the pesantren-educated *santri*.

Notwithstanding this Christian mission expectation, for most of the nineteenth century the actual number of Muslim peoples in the archipelago who converted to Christianity remained negligible. The meager fruits of the mission effort are today often explained as a result of colonial policies that reinforced the perception that Christianity was the religion of European peoples and that conversion to Christianity amounted to a repudiation of one's ethnic identity (Bamualim 2015; van Akkeren 1970). As the Dutch historian Maryse Kruithof has shown in a beautifully written study (Kruithof 2014), a recurring theme in European missionaries' diaries in the late nineteenth century was their disappointment upon arriving in the Indies only to discover that, contrary to what they had been led to believe, few among Java's ostensibly nominal Muslims were in fact interested in the Christian gospel (see also Madinier 2015). The situation among non-Muslim peoples in the outer islands, including Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and the Maluku archipelago, as well as interior portions of Sumatra, was to prove a more fertile ground for missionary activity in the early twentieth century. Today the greatest proportion of the almost 10% of the Indonesian population that is Christian hails from these latter, always non-Muslim regions (Aragon 2000; Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008:137–228).

Nonstandard Islam Observed

When, in the early 1950s, Western anthropologists like Clifford Geertz (1960a), Hildred Geertz (1961), and Robert Jay (1963, 1969) carried out ethnographic research in rural Java, they too realized that the nonstandard, syncretic Muslim community was vast and that its single greatest concentration was among ethnic Javanese in the provinces of East and Central Java. In these latter regions, nonstandard Muslims were sometimes referred to as *abangan* (lit., "the red [ones]" or, alternately, *kejawen*, "Javanists") (see M. Ali 2011; Burhani 2013c; Hefner 1987a,

1987b; Kersten 2015:225–7). Although in recent years the term has become popular in middle-class parlance for Muslims either secular in outlook or casual in religious observance, the label "*abangan*" was in fact not used in many parts of Java in the early independence and New Order eras. This latter fact is contrary to the assumption that runs through the late M.C. Ricklefs' otherwise careful *Islamisation and Its Opponents in Java* (Ricklefs 2012:16).

My ethnohistorical research over a thirty-year period revealed that in most parts of Java the term *abangan* was pejorative and thus not widely used for self-ascription, especially in the far eastern territories of the island stretching from Malang to Banyuwangi, where a large population of non-Muslims and nonstandard Muslims had survived well into the late twentieth century. Nicholas Herriman (2012, 2014) and Andrew Beatty's (1999) ethnographies of Javanese religion in the Banyuwangi area in far eastern Java make the same observation. With only a few territorial exceptions, the label was equally uncommon in the Central-West Java borderland regencies stretching from Tegal on the north coast to Cilacap and Banyumas in the south, which I visited during several research treks in the early 1990s and again in the 2000s. At least until the late New Order period, what all these territories had in common is that they preserved a vigorously nonstandard repertoire of Javanese customs, including what some among their practitioners referred to as *agama Islam* (Islamic religion). The default tendency among Muslims in all of these regions was simply to refer to the localized profession of their faith as "Islam," or "Islam [as practiced] here" (Jav., *Islam kene*), and to identify modern, reform-minded varieties of Islam, like those of Muhammadiyah or Nahdlatul Ulama, as "Islam Muhammadiyah" or "Islam NU," with no hint of these adjectival qualifiers being pejorative.

A generation ago, most Western scholars of Indonesia assumed that the core of the religious tradition to which Java's *abangan* adhered was a mix of Hindu-Buddhist and animistic practices lying beneath a superficially Islamic garb (Geertz 1960a; Jay 1969). Today we know that such characterizations greatly exaggerate the influence of "Hindu-Buddhism" in Javanese religiosity and fail to take seriously that many people regarded their localized ritual and cosmological traditions as consistent with and indeed deriving from Islam (see Alatas 2021; Daniels 2009; Hodgson 1974; Woodward 1989:2, 2011:58–60).

Rather than being primarily Hindu-Buddhist, the ritual traditions to which the *abangan* were heir were representative of a variety of Islam associated with an earlier wave of Islamization in the Southeast Asia region, one that blended indigenous social customs and cosmologies with a varied array of Sufi observances and beliefs (Alatas 2021; Lombard 1990; Ricci 2011). There is a broader contrast with the history of Islam in the Middle East operative here: "Whereas in the Middle East, Sufism had only emerged in a systematic way several centuries after the Islamisation process of the Arab world was complete, in the Malay world Sufism came to be normative during the formative years" (Lohlker 2021:193; see Van Bruinessen and Howell 2007). And the Sufism influential during the first centuries

following Islam's arrival was in robust interaction with indigenous Malay and Javanese traditions of spirituality. Most varieties of this first-wave Sufism were also as yet unreformed by the scriptural and shariah-oriented norms to which growing numbers of Malayo-Indonesian Sufis would rally from the late nineteenth century onwards (Alatas 2021:68; Laffan 2011:7–23; Riddell 2001).

Rather than being legal-minded or *fiqh*-focused, then, these earlier waves of Islamicate civilization organized their religious observances around ritual meals (*slametan*; see Beatty 1999, Herriman 2014; Woodward 1989, 2011), the veneration of the Prophet and Muslim saints, pilgrimage (*ziarah*) to saint shrines and other sites of spiritual power (Taylor 1999), and offerings (*sesajen*) to chthonic guardian spirits (Daniels 2009:27, 48; Hefner 1985:73). Although today most modern Muslims regard many of these traditions as heterodox, these practices had counterparts in broad swaths of the Middle Eastern and South Asian Muslim world prior to the rise of modern scripturalist reform in the nineteenth century (Ahmed 2016; Karamustafa 2007:132–3). They and their counterparts here in the Indonesian archipelago were representative of earlier constructions of Islam, ones merging a Sufi and Qur'anic imaginary with localized cosmologies of ancestry, mysticism, and spiritual potency. This earlier variety of archipelagic (*nusantara*) Islam recognized religious authorities more varied than classically trained religious scholars (*ulama*, Jav., *kiai*) and regarded the sources of Islamic knowledge (*ilmu, ngelmu*; Ar., '*ilm*) as more varied than scripture or religious commentaries alone (see Alatas 2021:77–8).

Western scholars and many native Javanese contrasted the *abangan* with the more legal-minded wing of the Muslim community, who were often referred to as "white [ones]" (*putihan*) or *santri*. Tellingly, the latter term refers to students in *madrasa* boarding schools, locales which in Java and most of Indonesia are known as *pesantren* (lit., "place of the santri") or *pondok pesantren* ("domicile for santri"; see Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007; Dhofier 1999). In Indonesia and most other parts of the Muslim-majority world, madrasas are boarding schools for intermediate and advanced study in the Islamic sciences, including the most socially applied of those sciences, Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*; see Berkey 1992, 2003; Gaborieau 1997; Makdisi 1981; Moosa 2014). The social ascendance of the *santri* in the early decades of the twentieth century, then, was part and parcel of the growing influence of a *fiqh*-minded Muslim community organized in large part around *pesantren* boarding schools and the religious economies of which they were part. I explore the educational bases of *santri* knowledge and practice more fully in Chapter 5.

Although the phrase "*abangan*" was not used for self-ascription among any ethnic grouping other than the Javanese, elsewhere in early independence Indonesia there were populations who resembled Java's *abangan* in that they identified as Muslim while subscribing to cosmologies and ritual practices that the growing community of scriptural-minded Muslims would come to regard as heterodox. Among the most prominent of these nonstandard Muslims were the *wetu telu* Sasak of Lombok (Avonius 2004; Cederroth 1981, 1996), the Gumai of Sumatra's southern

highlands (Sakai 1999), and small communities of indigenous Muslims in southern Sulawesi (M. Ali 2011; Pelras 1996; Gibson 2007) and West Java (Bamualim 2015; Millie 2008). Even in Madura, a region known since the late nineteenth century for the strength of its people's proud commitment to a *fiqh*-oriented Islam (today typically of an NU variety), a small number of ethnic Madurese in the island's far eastern regency practiced a nonstandard variety of Islam, one strongly influenced by a blend of Sufism and localized ritual traditions (Bouvier 1990; Pribadi 2013). This Madurese variety of mystical Islam only began to decline in a drastic manner after the 1980s. A nonstandard Islam related to that seen among the Gumai, Javanese, Sundanese, and other nonstandard Muslims had once also been widespread among ethnic Malays on the Malay peninsula in what is today Malaysia. However, as in northern and Western Sumatra, in these regions movements for the profession of a more *fiqh*-compliant Islam were in ascendance earlier than was the case in Java, Lombok, or south Sulawesi. The currents first appeared in some Muslim court circles in the seventeenth century, but they gained broader societal traction with the rise of new reform movements like the Padris of West Sumatra from the late eighteenth century onward (see Dobbin 1983; Laderman 1991; Peletz 1996, 1997; Roff 1967).

Notwithstanding the eventual ascendance of reformist Islam, the practitioners of varieties of Islam that deviated from the Sunni standard remained a major current in Indonesian society until well into the 1970s. In all regions where such communities remained vibrant, one saw an array of local ritual specialists who, like those in the Takengan region of the Gayo highlands studied by John Bowen, "explain what they do in terms of initial events of cosmic creation that gave all humans access to divine powers" (Bowen 1993:11). That all humans had such access to divine power is to say, of course, that formally educated and *fiqh*-minded *ulama* enjoy no real monopoly over what really matters, Islamically speaking. Over the course of the twentieth century, however, these nonstandard and non-scriptural ways of knowing and practicing Islam, accessible to all who had an interest whatever their formal educational background, were increasingly discredited by reform-minded Muslims. The latter's understanding of Islam "stresses the importance of conforming to scripture-based norms," rather than engaging in freely available exchange with ancestors, guardian spirits, and other divine powers (Bowen 1993:12).

As Bowen, Beatty, Alatas, and other ethnographers of Islam in Indonesia have observed (see also Daniels 2009; Geertz 1968, 1973; Woodward 2011), the achievement of such a consensus on the proper boundaries of Islam and non-Islam cannot by any means be taken as given, and in some regions disputes over religions' borders gave rise to tensions and even violence. Some of the more controversial features of such nonstandard varieties of Islam include the downplaying or outright neglect of obligatory prayers (*salat*) and congregational worship at mosques on Fridays. For example, among those ethnic Sasak on the island of Lombok who self-identify as *wetu telu* (lit, "three time"), historically there were mosques but their architectural style differed from those of mainline Sunnis. No less significant,

the structures were not used for Friday congregational worship but for the celebration of offering rituals performed by ritual specialists on certain locally defined religious feast days (Avonius 2004; Cederroth 1981).

For the Javanist Muslims among whom I worked in East Java (Pasuruan and Malang regencies) in the 1980s and in the southern coastal portions of the Special District of Yogyakarta in 1999–2008, it was once similarly easy to distinguish Javanist communities from their *santri* neighbors by the near-total absence in the former's villages of mosques or prayer houses (*musholla*, Jav., *langgar*). Rather than mosques, Javanist villages gave pride of place to outdoor and open-air ritual shrines known as *sanggar*. The latter were typically situated adjacent to some environmentally striking and supernaturally potent site like a spring, rock outcropping, or dense cluster of trees; these locales were said to be regularly visited by spirits of the village founders (*cikal bakal*) or territorial guardian spirits (*dhanyang*; Hefner 1985:58, 108).

As Andrew Beatty (1999:75) has observed in a thoughtful ethnography of spirit shrine activity in the Banyuwangi region of East Java in the 1990s, the maintenance of such guardian spirit cults often required an "effective censorship" whereby a spirit is recognized in ritual practice, but "the cult dare not speak its name." As Povinelli (2016), Boellstorff (2005:582), and Laidlaw (2014:79) have all observed (with reference to different ethnographic case studies), self-censorship of the latter sort is common in societies where, rather than everyone subscribing to a shared set of core values, actors move across social fields without "having a unified, unchanging identity in all social situations" because the values they enact in one sphere contradict those dominant in another (Boellstorff 2005:174; see also Jackson 2022:114). In many Javanese communities during the New Order, ritual complexes enacting spiritual values incommensurable with education-based and state-authorized orthodoxy became the target of reformist campaigns that succeeded in suppressing the spirit cult shrines or redefining them as "traditional arts" rather than religion (Beatty 1999, 2009; Hefner 1987a, 2011a; Kim 1996).

The absence of mosques or prayer houses across these and other areas of Java offered the most striking evidence of the fact that the second of the three features that Merle Ricklefs has identified with the "Mystic Synthesis" in Java – "observation of the five pillars of Islamic ritual" (2012:2012) – was by no means as universal as he had assumed (Ricklefs 2006). Management of these all-important spirit shrines was the responsibility of not a local mosque leader (*imam*) or religious scholar (*alim*) but a customary official typically referred to as the "keeper of the key" (*juru kunci*). Notwithstanding his rather humdrum title, the keeper of the key was typically a hereditary male ritual specialist well versed in Arabic and Javanese-language prayers and linked by descent to the human-spirits-become-guardians thought periodically to descend from the heavens and take up residence in the *dhanyang* shrine (see Beatty 1999:99–100; Hefner 1985:108–9). In other words, in many respects the keeper of the key was the Javanese equivalent of the

mansab or "lords of the sanctuaries" that Alatas has described for the Hadramawt region in Yemen. Both roles were hereditary and "often filled with unlearned individuals whose only concern was perpetuating the asymmetrical relations they had established vis-à-vis their . . . followers, instead of instructing them on proper religious knowledge" (Alatas 2021:66).

As I witnessed at dozens of events in the 1980s in Pasuruan, East Java, and even in the early 2000s in western Yogyakarta, rituals at these latter sites typically centered on the key keeper's burning of incense and the presentation of offerings (*sajen, sesajen*) to ancestral, guardian, and world spirits in conjunction with the celebration of the communal ritual meals known in Java as *slametan* (Beatty 1999:25–50; Hefner 1985:104–10; Woodward 1989:52, 57, 2011:113–35). Larger village festivals like the annual "cleansing of the village" (*bersih desa*) also involved ceremonial processions to these open-air shrines, and the presentation of offerings, dances, and alcohol to the spirits by professional female dancers (*thledek*) in the company of village officials (see Beatty 1999:55–8; Hefner 1987b; Wessing 2016).

Incommensurabilities Within Culture

All this is to say that, rather than a settled and "strong sense of Islamic identity" (Ricklefs 2012:7) organized around the faithful performance of Islam's five ritual pillars, a significant portion of Java's population until the mid-twentieth century adhered to ritual and cosmological traditions viewed as Islamic by their practitioners but regarded by madrasa-schooled Muslims as incommensurable with Islam. At the heart of many such nonstandard professions of Islam was the celebration of generative dualities underlying human and natural existence, including those of male and female, earth and sky, sun and moon, soil and water, and first-founders (*cikal-bakal*) and their living descendants (see Beatty 1999:38, 67–8; Hefner 1985:115–17). Although widespread in Java and Bali, Kathryn Robinson and other scholars of eastern Indonesia have shown that such "[d]ual classification is an intrinsic feature of social organisation and cultural expression in eastern Indonesia" (Robinson 2021:10).

As I encountered in the course of research on varieties of Javanist Islam in rural East Java in the 1980s (Hefner 1985, 1990), and in south-central Java (Yogyakarta-Solo) in the early 2000s, most of the spirits invoked in such interactions have been "Islamized" by being identified with the generic category of spirits known in Islamic tradition as *jinn*. In addition, since the agency of such spirits is seen as limited and God-given, "recognizing their power was . . . not regarded as *shirk*" or the sin of polytheistic idolatry (Alatas 2021:45). The term *jinn* is found in multiple passages in the Qur'an (Qur'an, 72). The term refers to a category of supernatural being regarded as lesser than angels and capable of assuming human and other sentient forms. Like humans, *jinn* have a free will and are thus capable of acting in a manner that can be good, evil, or ethically neutral.

Notwithstanding this articulation of local spiritual beliefs in accordance with Qur'anic spiritual categories, another Javanese phrase commonly used to refer to the more august of such spiritual creatures is *roh bau rekso* (lit., "guardian spirit") (cf. Hefner 1985:14; Wessing 2016). In my experience, the powers attributed to such guardian spirits vary widely, and for some Javanese these can include supernatural capacities so expansive as to be glaringly incommensurable with Qur'anic characterizations of jinn. More alarming from the point of view of the *fiqh*-educated Muslim reformists who became increasingly influential in Sumatra (from the late eighteenth century onward) and Java (from the mid-nineteenth century), many such spirits were or are still today conceptualized by way of textual traditions and performances that local people themselves believed to have existed prior to the coming of Islam, even if now understood as a legitimate part of the local practice of Islam. In other words, what we witness in such traditions is not simply a nonstandard Islam but a Javanese example of what the Thailand scholar Peter Jackson has described as "polyontologism": a religious tradition grounded on not a rationalized and unitary discourse or worldview but "distinct, contiguous but non-blended sources of religious potency" (Jackson 2022:139).

Polyontological traditions of a broadly Muslim nature were found not only in Java but among the Bugis of south Sulawesi (Robinson 2021; Pelras 1996; Gibson 2007) and the *wetu telu* Sasak of Lombok (Cederroth 1981, 1996; Avonius 2004). Prior to the advent of state-sponsored Islamic reform in the late 1960s, for example, the *wetu telu* Sasak participated in annual rituals of remembrance and veneration to guardian beings that included *Bhatara Indra*, a spiritual being who is recognized (but conceptualized differently) by Lombok's Hindu-Balinese minority (Avonius 2004; Cederroth 1981). In south-central Java, the Muslim sultan of Yogyakarta and the *susuhunan* of Surakarta still today sponsor annual rituals of invocation and offering to the goddess of the South Java sea as well as to various guardian deities of the mountains. In Surakarta, court rituals identified the goddess with Durga, a spiritual being who also figures in the ritual cosmologies of Balinese and Tengger-Javanese Hindus (Headley 2000, 2004; Smith-Hefner 1992). In these and many other examples, we again see clear evidence that what Ricklefs has described as the "mystic synthesis" was not nearly as stable or neatly commensurable as his analysis assumes. Some nonstandard Muslims subscribed to a polyontological ritual legacy that, in the face of growing calls for Islamic reform, "dare not speak its name."

The persistence of communities self-identifying as Muslim but preserving ritual practices and cosmologies that scholars trained in the Qur'an, Sunna of the Prophet, and jurisprudence regard as heterodox is, of course, not at all unique to Indonesia. Professions of Islam that depart from the Sunni or Shi'a norm survived into modern times even in areas of the world that had experienced earlier and far-reaching processes of Sufi-led and madrasa-reinforced Islamization. This has been the pattern, for example, in Bengal in South Asia (Eaton 1993; Roy 1983), as well as Syria, Iraq, and Iran in the Middle East (Kehl-Bodrogi, Kellner-Heinkele, and

Otter-Beaujean 1997; van Bruinessen 1999). However, in these countries as in modern Indonesia, the confluence of postcolonial nation-making and madrasa-based religious reform gave rise to campaigns for more standardized and scripturally based ways of knowing and performing Islam. In other words, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were to see the "emergence of a vision of an objectified universal Islam" in Indonesia (Alatas 2021:62).

For believers drawn to this vision of an Islam, not polyontological but "posited to be consistent, autonomous, and purified from the particularities of local cultures" (Alatas 2021:71), then, the reform of Islam was not regarded as a private personal matter. It was an urgent priority required so as to raise Indonesians to a modern, civilized, and religionized practice of national belonging and authentic Islamic observance.

Islam Observed and Remade

Here in Indonesia, then, the existence of such nonstandard and polyontological varieties of Islam was no mere academic matter; their presence was at the center of public disputes over how to know and practice Islam and to live as modern Indonesian citizens. Contentions over these issues raged with special intensity in communities of ethnic Javanese on the island of Java, although the conflict raged in Hindu-majority Bali as well (Robinson 1995). In Java, the rivalry between *abangan* and more normative-minded *santri* Muslims was particularly fierce in the years leading up to the rise of the New Order in 1965–6. In the early years of the Republic, ethnic Javanese comprised about half of Indonesia's population (today the figure has fallen to about 42%), and scholars like Clifford and Hildred Geertz and Robert Jay made clear that nonstandard Muslims constituted the majority among ethnic Javanese. More recent Western scholarship on Islam in Indonesia, including Ricklefs's three-volume opus (Ricklefs 2006, 2007, 2012), has confirmed these mid-century estimates.

Ricklefs and other studies (see Hefner 1987a, 2000) have also demonstrated that in Java from the 1950s to early 1960s, the *abangan* comprised the backbone of the country's two most important non-Islamic political parties, namely the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) and the PKI. As anthropologists first reported in the 1980s, field studies have also confirmed that, since the destruction of the PKI and the consolidation of the New Order government in the late 1960s, *abangan* numbers have fallen drastically (Hefner 1987a, 1990, 2011a; Jamhari 2000; Kim 1996; Pranowo 1993; Picard and Madinier 2011; Ricklefs 2012). Indeed, if one uses the term "*abangan*" to describe a nonstandard form of Islam with polyontological cosmologies and community-sponsored religious festivities involving offerings to guardian spirits, rather than as a shorthand label for individuals indifferent to *fiqh*-oriented piety, *abangan* numbers have probably fallen to no more than 5% to 8% of the ethnic Javanese population (see Hefner 2011a; Ricklefs 2012). In Java in the early to mid-twentieth century and thus prior to the New Order transition,

however, *abangan* numbers were still much larger. Ricklefs (2012) has estimated that they comprised a solid majority among ethnic Javanese in the provinces of East and Central Java from the early twentieth century to the 1970s. The numbers of their nonstandard Muslim counterparts in territories like Lombok, Madura, South Sulawesi, and South Sumatra were smaller but still socially significant.

Whatever their precise scale, the presence of these nonstandard Muslim traditions at the heart of Indonesian society in the early independence period presented a religious as well as political challenge to Muslim political parties and mass organizations.[3] Secular nationalist Indonesians who identified with the Nationalist and Communist Parties favored extending equal rights to these religious communities, placing civic rights above any obligation to impose a religionized orthodoxy on those who called themselves Muslim. However, at the height of the Muslim parties' bitter struggle with the PKI, civic inclusivity of this sort was difficult for the tens of millions of Muslims aligned with Islamic associations like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. However unwavering their commitment to the ideals of nationalism and citizenship, the leadership of these latter organizations believed that the calling (*da'wa*; Ind., *dakwah*) for Muslims to profess Islam in the manner God and His Prophet had instructed is a paramount ethical project central to, rather than separate from, citizenship and national life. Once common only among the country's pious (*santri*) minority, the viewpoint that the state has a critical role to play in the promotion of normative piety was to become dominant in public life by the early years of post-Suharto *Reformasi*.

In the deeply unsettled political context of the early independence period, however, no such consensus on religionization as yet existed. In fact, the first fifteen years of the new Indonesian republic saw the explosive growth of the new mystical movements discussed earlier in this chapter and known as spirituality beliefs (*aliran kepercayaan, aliran kebatinan*). Movements of this sort are not a new phenomenon. One of the earliest *aliran kebatinan* movements had been established in Purworejo, Central Java, in 1895. However, most of what were to become the largest and best organized *aliran kebatinan* were established only in the final years of Dutch colonial rule. This was the age of great social movements (*gerakan*; see Shiraishi 1990) – which is to say a period when popular society across broad expanses of Java, Sumatra, South Sulawesi, and South Kalimantan was being transformed under the influence of colonial rule, new print technologies, and mass-based religious and political organizations (Feener 2007; Geels 1997; Mulder 1978; Stange 1980, 1986). The rise of formally organized mystical associations was a coevolutionary response to these same developments.

Although the growth of Muslim mass organizations like Muhammadiyah (est. 1912) and Nahdlatul Ulama (est. 1926) took place on a scale far greater than any religious associationalism emerging among nonstandard Muslims in Java, Lombok, Sumatra, or Sulawesi, some of the nonstandard movements experienced significant growth too. Moreover, the fact that religious leaders in some of these communities had ties to the Nationalist and Communist Parties added to the sense of siege in

mainstream Muslim circles. Social-history interviews that I conducted with some eighty elders in twenty-five villages in the Pasuruan and Malang districts in East Java (1985, 1993) and in southern and western districts in the special district of Yogyakarta (1999, 2008, 2010) indicated that in the 1950s all of these districts had witnessed explosive growth in *kebatinan* membership. Two groups with which I gathered the most complete oral historical records during these years – the Javanese Budha-Visnu Religion (*Agama Budha Visnu Jawi*) in Pasuruan and the "Four Five Religion" (*agama papat-limo*) in Yogyakarta and Surakarta – grew from having several hundred followers in 1954 to have 15,000–25,000 (respectively) in 1965 (Hefner 1987a, 2004; cf. Beatty 1999; Ricklefs 2012). Chaider S. Bamualim's study of Islam and *kebatinan* groups in West Java (focusing on two kebatinan groups still prominent in West Java today, the *Agama Djawa Soenda* and the *Aliran Kebatinan Perjalanan*) similarly confirms that a surge in mystical ranks occurred during the mobilizational free-for-all of the 1950s (Bamualim 2015:30–40, 101–15; see also Ricklefs 2012:136).

Whatever their precise background, most of these new religious movements had a family-resemblant genealogy. Their founders typically claimed to have received divine inspiration (*wangsit*), revelation (*wahyu*), or spiritual knowledge (*ngelmu, ilmu*) directly from God, typically in dreams rather than scriptural revelation. As illustrated in the example of Kyai Madrais Alibasa Kusuma Wijaya Ningrat, the founder of a small syncretic movement established in the 1920s in the Kuningan district of West Java and known as the *Agama Jawa Sunda* ("Javanese-Sundanese Religion"), a handful of these quasi-prophetic figures came from *santri* backgrounds, having studied in Islamic boarding schools (Mutaqin 2014:8). As was also the case with Madrais, some of these Islam-schooled *kebatinan* adepts also eventually came to regard themselves as no longer Muslim. Other mystics, however, preferred to emphasize that their adherence to *kebatinan* spirituality did not preclude affiliation with Islam, Christianity, or any other formal faith tradition (Stange 1980). The followers of both the *Pangestu* and *Perjalanan kebatinan* movements among whom I did research in 2006–7 and 2019 in the Yogyakarta region made clear that they prefer this latter mode of inexclusive, polyontological affiliation. More specifically, rather than wishing to be identified as religions/*agama*, their leaders explained they prefer to be classified for state census purposes as *kepercayaan* spiritualists so as to allow their members to affiliate (as many do) with a state-recognized religion like Islam or Roman Catholicism (Maarif et al. 2019; see also Muttaqin 2012).

In the eyes of many Muslim officials during the 1950s in mainstream organizations like the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, however, a proper profession of any religion did not allow such categorical shape-shifting. More to the point, except in those rare cases where adepts come from Christian, Hindu, or Buddhist backgrounds, the followers of *aliran kebatinan* risk being categorized by some people as apostates from Islam, pure and simple. It is important to add that, in twentieth-century Indonesia, most Muslim jurists have *not* called for the execution

of apostates from Islam, as is recommended (under certain strict conditions and with numerous opportunities for the apostate to recant) in the four main schools of Sunni jurisprudence (*fiqh*; see Friedmann 2003). However, the armed fringe associated with exclusivist Islamist groups like the Darul Islam movement in the 1940s (Formichi 2012) and the JI in the 2000s (Chapter 4) has not hesitated to call for such draconian penalties.

Although the majority of Muslim jurists in Indonesia reject imposing harsh penalties on those who leave Islam, most nonetheless view apostasy as a grave sin and a threat to social harmony. The fact that, in the 1950s, some of *kebatinan*'s proponents were individuals born Muslim but later associated with the PKI added to the conviction in Muslim circles that *kebatinan* and other nonstandard spiritualities had to be seen as not authentic religions but movements promoting apostasy from Islam. This sense of alarm was compounded by the fact that political polarization was also pressing some syncretic Muslims into openly anti-Islamic *kebatinan* groups like *Permai* (Geertz 1973) and the East Java branch of the *Agama Buda Visnu Jawa* ("Javanese Buddha-Visnu Religion," see Hefner 1985, 1987:540–8).[4] For the supporters of Muslim social organizations, the anti-Islamic synergy made the specifically *religious* threat of the *kebatinan* movement all the more alarming.

Staffed disproportionately by well-educated Muslims from Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (Boland 1982:105–12; Ropi 2012), the MORA in the 1950s was also alarmed by the scale of the *kebatinan* advance. Not without reason, MORA officials were convinced that some activists in the Nationalist and Communist Parties were encouraging apostasy from Islam so as to strengthen their bases of party support. As the State-Islamic-University-based scholar, Ismatu Ropi, has observed in a ethnohistorical study of the evolution of MORA policies on religion and state, the strength of the Nationalist and Communist Parties in parliament and society during these years made Ministry officials reluctant to criticize either political party openly (Ropi 2012:131). But no such tolerance was theologically feasible with *kebatinan* groups openly recruiting followers from the margins of the Muslim community.

In keeping with the mobilizational spirit of the early independence period, in 1951 the politician that we saw earlier who had played a role in the meetings leading to the recognition of "spiritual beliefs" in Article 29 of the 1945 Constitution, Wongsonegoro, made a new appearance on the national scene. Over the course of the year, he traveled across Java in an effort to create a federation of kebatinan groups, which eventually came to be known as the Committee for the Organization of Philosophy and Mysticism's Meeting (*Panitia Penyelenggara Pertemuan Filsafat dan Kebatinan*). As Neils Mulder (1978:4–6) has also reported, in 1955, Wongsonegoro joined forces with the leaders of other *kebatinan* groups to form the All-Indonesia Congress for Kebatinan (*Badan Kongres Kebatinan Indonesia*). In 1957, the Congress issued a declaration affirming that the first or *Ketuhanan* ("godliness") principle of the Pancasila was actually a concept inspired by *kebatinan*, not by Islam. Even more startling in the eyes of Muslim officials, Congress

representatives declared boldly that their religion was the "original religion" (*agama asli*) of all Indonesians. A minority in the *kebatinan* community now even spoke disparagingly of Islam as "an imported religion" or a "religion of the Arabs" (Ropi 2012:141; Bamualim 2015; Hefner 1990; Mutaqin 2014:9).

Alarmed by the wildfire spread of *kebatinan* groups, in 1952 the MORA established a new ministry desk for monitoring the groups. Over the years the desk (which is operative still today) came to be known as the PAKEM – the Supervisory Bureau for Spiritual Groups in Society (*Pengawas Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat*; Ropi 2012:132; Stange 1986:82). Benefiting from the Ministry's nationwide administrative presence, PAKEM bureaus were soon established in towns and subdistricts across the archipelago. In 1959–60, military commanders in several provinces sponsored the formation of PAKEM offices in an effort to counteract the expansion of the Communist Paraty (Ramstedt 2019:272). As far as MORA officials were concerned, the first duty of the PAKEM was not merely to monitor and supervise mystical groups but to do away with them entirely by bringing their adherents back to Indonesia's state-recognized religions (*agama*). As Ropi observes and I too was told by MORA officials in the early 2000s, during the years of *aliran* mobilization this task became "one of the MORA's priorities" (ibid.:131; cf. Stange 1986:83).

Another, more specifically public policy aim of the MORA initiative was to block *kebatinan* groups' efforts to win state recognition as a "religion" (*agama*) rather than a "spiritual belief" (*kepercayaan*). At its third congress in 1957, the Kebatinan Congress appealed directly to President Sukarno to extend legal recognition to *kebatinan* groups on par with that of the country's state-recognized religions. At its fourth congress in 1960, and confident that their campaign was gaining traction, Congress members asked not merely for equal legal standing but for state funding (Ropi 2012:135). Although his mother was a Hindu-Balinese and many of his most ardent supporters were known for their sympathies toward *kebatinan* mysticism, Sukarno remained uncharacteristically silent in the face of the mystics' appeals.

Religionization Juridified: The Blasphemy Edict

It was in this turbulent political context, then, that President Sukarno issued a presidential edict that was to mark a turning point in the state management of religion from the 1960s to today. At the time of its issuance, few observers could have imagined the edict's legacy would prove so lasting. The declaration was Presidential Stipulation No. 1/PNPS/1965 on "Preventing the Misuse and Defamation of Religion." As Ropi has observed, the main target of the regulation was first and foremost the *aliran kebatinan* community:

> One of the reasons for its [Stipulation No. 1/1965's] application was the rise of a variety of *aliran kebatinan*. For many, the unprecedented development of

> this new religious movement was seen as a source of social disorder, national disintegration and religious "confusion" in society.
>
> *(Ropi 2012:139–40)*

This rationale was expressed even more bluntly in the Elucidation to the 1965 Presidential Edict. That statement urged all government officials to take measures so as to lead the followers of *aliran kebatinan* back "to a healthy vision in accord with the direction of God Almighty [*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*]" (ibid.).

The fact that in January 1965 it was President Sukarno who established the legal edifice for far-reaching restrictions on religion and heterodoxy has long struck many Indonesian observers as paradoxical because the community that was most imperiled by the new regulation included the nonstandard *abangan* who figured among Sukarno's most loyal followers. However, the rationale for the edict lay less in the president's personal religious convictions than in his determination to hold up an eroding base of support in the Muslim wing of his governing coalition. A few years prior to issuing the presidential stipulation, Sukarno had dismissed Indonesia's parliament and introduced a presidentially dominated "Guided Democracy" (Feith 2006; Lev 1966). In an effort to assemble a new ruling coalition, Sukarno hobbled together an unwieldy alliance built on his concept of NASAKOM, an acronym for (the alliance of) "Nationalism-Religion-Communism" (see Soekarno 1970). As the acronym implies, the coalition was designed to rest on three social pillars: Sukarno's base of support in the Indonesian National Party (PNI); the (as of the early 1960s) even larger PKI; and, most improbably of all, the wing of the Muslim community associated with the traditionalist and fiercely anti-communist Nahdlatul Ulama (see Boland 1982:102; Fealy 2003:229–44).

A teetering edifice from the start, by late 1964 the three partners in the NASAKOM alliance had fallen into bitter infighting. In the East and Central Java countryside, mass groupings associated with the PKI and NU had clashed with each other, in contests sparked in the first instance by PKI attempts to launch "unilateral actions" (*aksi sepihak*) to enforce certain legislated but as yet unfulfilled agrarian reforms. Army intelligence officers under the command of a little-known General Suharto used the growing unrest to strengthen ties with local Muslim leaders (Ricklefs 2008:332). Not coincidentally, some of the PKI's mobilizations targeted the landholdings of NU landowners – a social class that provided the economic foundation for the country's powerful network of Islamic boarding schools (Dhofier 1999; Hefner 1990). Not surprisingly, too, NU leaders responded in kind, mobilizing their own militias in a fierce push-back against the PKI campaign. Several of the largest *pesantren* in East Java, adjacent to territories where I did research in the 1980s, countered the PKI campaign not merely by mobilizing their own militias but by joining in training exercises with the army (Ricklefs 2012:107). As senior NU leaders recalled in interviews with me in 1985 in Pasuruan regency and in 2008 in Bantul district, Yogyakarta, all this was to prove a dress rehearsal for the horrific violence of late 1965, in the aftermath of the failed September 30

coup (see Chandra 2019; Cribb 1990; Fealy and McGregor 2010:40; Robinson 2018:141–2).

This conflict between ostensible allies in the NASAKOM coalition gave strategic urgency to Sukarno's issuing of the presidential edict on blasphemy. However, what made the edict of particular interest to NU and others in the Muslim community was not coalitional politics or agrarian class struggles but a matter of a more specifically religious nature: the threat posed by *kebatinan* groups to Muslim hopes to press forward with the religionized reform of the country's diverse Muslim traditions.

What made the blasphemy edict of additional and lasting importance, however, was that it impacted not just *kebatinan* groups but the entire infrastructure for state regulation of religion in Indonesia. In particular, buried in the edict's four articles were two regulations long advocated by MORA officials as well as by the country's mainline Muslim organizations but opposed by the country's secular nationalists, religious minorities, mystical groups, and Marxist socialists. The first of the two regulations made clear that, for the first time in the republic's history, the state listed just which among the nation's many faith traditions it officially recognized as "religions" (*agama*). Tellingly, the edict did not provide a definition of religion as such, and no legislative document (as opposed to Ministry communications) has ever done so since. As discussed earlier, the MORA had long advocated the creation of such a list and had insisted that it should be based on a restrictively religionized rather than a capaciously inclusive understanding of religion.

Sukarno's edict did not explicitly endorse this MORA perspective on religion. However, in one important respect the edict went further, extending state recognition to just six religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Representatives from the last three communities had been petitioning MORA officials since the early 1950s requesting state recognition. After much behind-the-scenes work, in 1963 Hindus and Buddhists had been provided with bureaus in MORA, joining the Christians and Muslims who had had bureaux since MORA's first years (Bakker 1993; Hefner 1985; Picard 2011; Ramstedt 2004). Although Confucianism was included in the edict's list, it had not yet been given a bureau in MORA, and it would not be for many years to come. Although in early 1967 President Suharto signaled that he might be willing to extend state recognition to Confucianism, later in the same year he issued a Presidential Instruction (No. 14/1967) describing Chinese culture as an impediment to Sino-Indonesians' integration into the nation; he also banned public celebrations of Chinese religious and cultural holidays (Ropi 2012:202; Suryadinata 2008, 2014). Only in 2000, at the height of the post-Suharto reform, would President Abdurrahman Wahid extend full state recognition to Confucianism (Abalahin 2005).

The second of the two regulations embedded in the presidential edict of 1965 represented an even greater concession to mainline Muslim organizations and a serious blow to the country's spiritual-belief minorities. Article 1 of the Blasphemy law prohibited all state support for spiritual movements regarded as "deviating

from" (*sesat*) or showing "enmity" toward the country's state-recognized religions (Crouch 2014:22–3, 161–3; Lindsey and Butt 2016:24). Articles 2 and 3 put in place sanctions through which the president can warn, ban, or jail those who misuse or defame any of Indonesia's recognized religions. Article 4 put in place provisions (Article 156a in the *Kitab Undang Undang Hukum Pidana*) threatening violators with up to five years of imprisonment. In short, the 1965 edict laid the legal foundation for the defense of what the mainstream community regarded as religionized orthodoxy and the prosecution of all deviating from its norms.

Curiously, however, and notwithstanding their far-ranging scope, the 1965 and 1969 regulations did not result in a groundswell of prosecutions against alleged religious deviants. In the period from 1965 to the dawn of democratic reform in 1998, only ten cases were brought to court (Bagir 2013). By contrast, as the Australian analyst Melissa Crouch has demonstrated, in the first five years following the return to electoral democracy in 1998–9, some 130 cases were brought forward for prosecution (Crouch 2014:138; cf. Crouch 2016).

In reality, however, the historical contrast is not quite as stark as these numbers imply. Although few prosecutions were brought in the years immediately following the issuance of the presidential edict, its two regulations had a severely constraining effect on Indonesia's religious minorities, not least on mystical movements. In the years following the 1965–6 destruction of the Communist Party, some 1.75 million people, most of them Javanist Muslims or former adherents of *kebatinan* spirituality groups, converted to Christianity. Most did so in the hope that Christianity might provide a safer haven than *kebatinan* against allegations that one was a communist (Boland 1982:232–3; Hefner 1993). Approximately one-sixth of that number of people converted to Hinduism, although as noted earlier, a much higher percentage of Hindu converts returned to Islam several years later (Beatty 1999:219; Hefner 2004; Ramstedt 2004, 2019).[5]

These examples show that the Blasphemy law's most lasting influence had less to do with benefits to Islamic authorities than it did a more general effect on the regulatory logic of religion, religious freedom, and recognition across faiths in modern Indonesia. Driven by new balances of power in state and society, both the understanding and practice of religion had changed and in a deeply consequential manner. More than at any previous point in the republic's history, the legislation extended state recognition and support to the category of faith traditions officially recognized as "religion"/*agama*. Officially, of course, "spiritual beliefs"/*kepercayaan* were still identified in Article 29 of the Constitution as benefiting from state protections. In fact, even as late as 1973, the developmental plan prepared every five years by a special committee in the national assembly (and known by the acronym, GBHN) still made explicit reference to *kebatinan* as if such traditions were legitimate forms of spiritual expression (Stange 1986:90). In the late 1970s *kebatinan* leaders were also still being given a few minutes each week on state television to present their spiritual teachings to a national audience. However, the Law on Religious Blasphemy had put in place a clear and

asymmetrical hierarchy between religion and spiritual beliefs. As the New Order advanced, social and political developments reinforced this differentiating drift. By the late 1990s, these developments had converged to make *kepercayaan* religiosity more vulnerable than ever to challenge by exclusivist Islamists. In the more open and agonistic atmosphere of the post-Suharto *Reformasi* era, this latent possibility would become a chronic reality (see Chapter 4).

In one sense, there is a political irony to these changes. It is that, although in its first years the authoritarian New Order (1966–98) banned most left-leaning *aliran kebatinan* and put in place a series of regulations to control religious life (especially Islamist movements), it remained tolerant of religious minorities, including nonpolitical varieties of *aliran kebatinan* mysticism. Suharto himself was known to have dabbled in the *kebatinan* sciences in his youth and middle years. One of his two closest military aides during those years, Sujono Humardani (1919–86) was a practitioner of Javanese mysticism and an outspoken defender of *kebatinan* interests (Hefner 2000:83; Ricklefs 2012:118–24). However, from the late 1990s onward, and in the face of a growing Islamic resurgence and opposition from former allies in the military, the president made extensive concessions to Muslim organizations, particularly on matters related to state-authorized understandings of religion and interreligious relations (Effendy 2003; Hefner 2000). Even then, however, Suharto resisted calls to take more repressive action against religious minorities, whether *kebatinan* adepts or Muslim minorities. It was only after Suharto's fall and the restoration of electoral democracy that acts of vigilante violence against Ahmadis, Shi'is, *kebatinan* followers, and other religious minorities escalated dramatically (see Chapter 4; Crouch 2014; Human Rights Watch 2013).

One of the most substantial effects of the Blasphemy regulations, then, has been that they have deepened an Indonesian variation on the modern phenomenon of religionization. In particular, the regulations have provided a legal ground for the way both government and religious groupings imagine, regulate, and practice religion. In discursive terms, the consolidation has involved a shift from a less formal and more capacious understanding of religion to a greatly circumscribed, formalized, and asymmetrical differentiation of "religion" from "spiritual beliefs." As Bourchier has observed, these and other developments in state and society also reinforced "a nativist, anti-liberal reading of *Pancasila*" (Bourchier 2019:727). The reading did so by identifying the first of the five principles, with its declaration of Indonesia as a nation based on religion, as now implying the state's right and obligation to enforce conformity to majority professions of Islam. In other words, the Pancasila too was religionized.

It was this change that was so vividly confirmed in a ruling by the Constitutional Court in 2010. In the face of a bitter opposition from religious-freedom advocates, and in the aftermath of several attacks on Indonesia's small Ahmadi community, the Supreme Court upheld the Law on Religious Blasphemy (Bagir 2013). The court's ruling was hugely disappointing to Indonesia's human rights and Muslim democratic community, as well as religious minorities. From a law-in-society

perspective, however, the court's ruling was neither startling nor radical. It was the legal culmination of a decades-long struggle that pitted the proponents of opposed ways of knowing and practicing Islam and citizenship against one another. In other words, popular understanding of religion showed the all-too-clear influence of long-standing political path dependencies. They also produced what Künkler and Shankar (2018:14) have aptly described as the "differential burdening" in state policy on religion, marked by the state's "privileging certain [religious] groups and dis-privileging others."

But just as earlier cultures of public ethics had changed as a result of new political realities, other, less officialized quests for a new and modern Muslim ethics were to continue. Stated in more theoretical terms, "the diversity of variably structured fields" (Peletz 2022:307), each "the site of a logic and a necessity that are *specific and irreducible* to those that regulate other fields" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:97), ensured that trends in Islamic higher education, women's roles, and a host of other domains did not always conform to religionization's regulatory logic. Indeed, the plurality of initiatives and organizations – especially in the Muslim community – would operate in a manner that would eventually destabilize key features of the religionization project itself.

Conclusion: Religionization and Cultural Capaciousness

In 2016, the late Shahab Ahmed (1966–2015) published a highly original book that recommends a reconceptualization of the "historical and human phenomenon that is Islam." He urges us in particular to come to terms with "the capaciousness, complexity, and . . . outright contradiction that obtains within the historical phenomenon" (Ahmed 2016:6) we understand as Islam. Among the phenomena he recommends we relocate *within* the Islamic are Akhbarian Sufism, Avicennan philosophy, the visual arts, and, perhaps most intriguingly, "crooked-hatted" sartorialism, understood as "a statement of an alternative normative notion of Islam expressed in an alternative normative way of going about life" (2016:206). Conversely, among those realities Ahmed would urge us to reposition away from Islam's normative center are state-legalistic varieties of shariah-mindedness that he argues never achieved paramountcy in premodern times but today have been accorded such centrality by large numbers of reform-minded Muslims.

Viewed less in terms of specific practices or textual legacies than in terms of broader hermeneutics, Ahmed's appeal for an expansive understanding of Islam as a social and historical phenomenon resonates in a striking way with Indonesian realities. Although the culture of crooked-hats and wine-drinking figured rather less in Islam *nusantara* than in the Balkans-to-Bengal crescent, Akhbarian Sufism, royal pageantry, and courtly traditions of spiritual refinement (*adab*) most certainly did. Indonesians involved in the latter pursuits typically felt that the activities in question were not merely a "cultural" legacy apart from Islam but were legitimate and essential ways of *being Islamic*. In the late colonial and early postcolonial

period, these understandings and practices of the Islamic became the target of campaigns by reformists buoyed by the confidence that scripture and *fiqh*-based legalism are the true heart of Islam, and their prioritization must underlie any program of Islamization and citizen-making. Although they began later than their counterparts in much of the Middle East, these campaigns have succeeded in marginalizing some but not all elements of a cultural and ethical paideia once at the heart of Indonesian Islam.

From Islam's first centuries in the archipelago, there had always been at least two broad currents within Islamic culture. The first was in a general way Malayo-Sumatran, having originated in some of the earliest centers of Muslim learning in the territories extending from Aceh and northern Sumatra to the Malay peninsula and parts of Kalimantan. From the thirteenth century onward, a significantly scripturalized, if still largely non-legalist, variety of Islamic culture took root in courts centers in this region. As Feener has shown (2013:20–6), by the end of the sixteenth century, the royal court of Aceh had emerged as a major center of learning for this variety of Islam, much of it under the patronage of the sultan. Even in this early period it became "common for Acehnese scholars of Islam to spend a period of their lives studying at various centres of Islamic learning in the Arabian peninsula" (Riddel 2001:104). Others traveled to study in South Asia and even Siam, which at the time had a significant resident community of Muslim scholars (see Bradley 2017).

Not surprisingly in terms of local religious culture, some of the most influential Acehnese scholars at this time, such as the celebrated Hamzah Fansuri (d. 1590), came under the influence of philosophical Sufism of an Akhbarian sort, that is, a Sufism influenced by the great Andalusian scholar and mystic, Ibn Arabi (1165–1240 C.E.; see Laffan 2011:9; Khan 2019:85–7). This tradition of Islamic mysticism promoted the recognition of an imminent and all-encompassing divinity and in turn linked the divine presence to the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*, the foundational unity of being (Feener 2007:119).

Fansuri also popularized the doctrine of the five stages of emanation with its culminating vision of the Perfect Man, notions related to the Akhbarian legacies that Shahab Ahmed rightly identified at the heart of the Balkans-to-Bengal Islamic. Fansuri's equally influential successor, Shams al-Din extended the five grades to its more familiar seven. The U.K.-based scholar of Indonesian Islamic literature and theology, Peter Riddell, captures well one of the other themes of Hamzah and Shams al-Din's Islamic; it is one that resonates powerfully with the *madhhab-i 'isyk* (*madhhab* of love) that both Shahab Ahmed and Muqtedar Khan have identified as central to the classical profession of Islam:

> Shams al-Din presents Love as a core theme in his theosophy. He suggests that it is through Love of God that we can attain perfection and come to an understanding of the union between Creator and creature.
>
> *(Riddell 2001:114–15)*

The related doctrine of the perfect man (*al-insan al-kamil*; see Feener 2007:25) was also widely embraced across the region extending from Aceh in the western archipelago over to Makassar and Bone on the island of Sulawesi in the east. Rulers in the latter regions converted to Islam only in the early years of the seventeenth century, in the aftermath of bitter dynastic wars (Robinson 2021).

There were other, less distinctly Akhbarian influences on the *nusantara* Islamic from early on as well. In 1637, an Indian Muslim scholar of Hadhrami ancestry by the name of Nuruddin ibn Al ar-Raniri (d. 1658) took up residence in the Aceh court under the patronage of Sultan Iskandar Thani (r. 1636–41). With the sultan's backing, ar-Raniri launched a campaign against the mysticism-oriented Akhbarian scholars previously welcomed in court circles, Hamzah Fansuri and Syamsuddin of Pasai, and succeeded at convincing court officials to have their written works destroyed. Although an orthodox Sufi himself, ar-Raniri soon escalated his campaign, accusing the Akhbarians of heresy for allegedly equating the Creator with the created and for claiming that mystical adepts are freed from the obligations of shariah (Riddell 2001:123). Ar-Raniri also eventually convinced the Sultan to arrest several of Shams al-Din's followers. Some recanted their views, but those who refused were executed, an act that ar-Raniri publicly defended (Ricklefs 2008:71; Riddell 2001:123). Ar-Raniri's attacks bore a striking resemblance to those launched at the Mughal court in India during the early seventeenth century under the rule of Emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–27). These were inspired in part by the reform-minded leader of the Naqshbandi order, Ahmad Sirhindi. As Riddell notes, "Sirhindi's influence brought about a great narrowing in the religious perspective of the court, and led to widespread persecution, murders, and destruction of literary works" (Riddell 2001:124). Although its forms and cultural priorities vary, religionization, we are reminded, is by no means a uniquely late-modern phenomenon (see Alatas 2021).

There was a second major current in the Muslim Indonesian Islamic, associated with ethnic Javanese on the densely populated island of Java, as well as a few neighboring regions, most notably the islands of Madura and Lombok. By comparison with Aceh or even with the cultural complex Ahmed describes for the Balkans-to-Bengal region, the legal, literary, and aesthetic heritage in these territories adopted a more capacious and polyontological approach to the question of how to know and practice Islam. But there was in addition a state-level dynamic to this archipelagic current. In 1649, one of central Java's more powerful kings, Amangkurat I, assembled and then executed some 2,000 ulama with an additional 3,000 family members on the ground that they had joined a failed conspiracy against the king (Alatas 2021:41; Ricklefs 2008:98). Although this act was no doubt as symptomatic of regional rivalries (inland agrarian kingdom versus the maritime coast) as it was anything doctrinal, it showed the degree to which the Javanese king at this time was willing and able to defy the Muslim scholarly community. In this and other regards, the *ulama*-state alliance that Ahmet Kuru has shown was so pervasive a feature across broad swaths of the premodern Sunni world was in Java considerably less well established (see Kuru 2019a:xvi, 3–4).

We can, I believe, take this latter incident as evidence of a religious culture considerably less settled on the terms of its social and epistemological core than that Ahmed associates with the Balkans-to-Bengal region. Ahmed writes that "the vast majority of the population of pre-modern societies of Muslims participated in the normative truth-claims and vocabulary of the hierarchical cosmologies of Sufism," giving rise to "a common paradigm of Islamic life and thought" (Ahmed 2016:75). The cultural situation in Java-Madura-Lombok appears in some regards to have been similar, but it was less stable and commensurable across social fields. Not most, but some of the mystical Javanese verse forms known as *suluk* continued to favor a monist and unreformed variety of Islamic mysticism. Some of the literature went further, "rejecting and ridiculing a legalistic approach to religion, tending to portray good works as of little benefit, and encouraging neglect of the obligatory duties of Islam" (Riddell 2001:173; building on Zoetmulder 1995:230).

In Java, the tides of shariah-mindedness appear to have shifted in the early eighteenth century under the influence of Queen Pakubuwana, the wife of King Pakubuwana I and a religious force in her own right. The Queen sponsored the composition of a scripturally oriented Islamic literature, including new versions of the story of Sultan Iskandar and the Story of Nabi Yusuf, as well as the even more influential *Kitab Usulbiyah* (Riddell 2001:174; see Alatas 2021). All these works foreground scriptural and prophetic themes but do so "while singing the praise of Javanese rulers . . . in a distinctly Javanese royal environment" (Riddell 2001:174). This agonistic plurality of Islamic authorities and normativities would remain a trademark of Javo-Islamic literature well into the early twentieth century (see Alatas 2021:71). As a result, Islamic orthodoxy in courtly circles was often "defined in terms of its identification with Javanese kingship, rather than in terms of specific theological statements" (Riddell 2001:177).

The broader point here is that, until the nineteenth century, the "cosmological re-infrastructuring" (Ahmed 2016:82) of Islam here in Indonesia was notably less uniform and commensurable than that Ahmed describes for the Balkans-to-Bengal region. Here in Indonesia the process retained a greater measure of what Peter A. Jackson has described in the Thai religious context as "epistemic multiplicity" (Jackson 2022:96). Less uniform too was the ulama-state alliance that Ahmet Kuru (2019a) has demonstrated was central to the emergence of an Islamicate culture in much of the premodern Middle East. The contrast had in large part to do with three basic infrastructural differences between the two regions. The first was that, although mystical orders (*tariqah*) had early on made their way to the archipelago, the libraries, hospitals, and houses of wisdom seen in the Balkans-to-Bengal region did not. One reason this historical fact is significant is that the medical sciences in large portions of the Muslim Middle East were spheres in which the philosophical-cum-natural-science current in Avicennan philosophy held its own by demonstrating its practical as well as religious benefits (see Adamson 2016; Ahmed 2016:60). In the Indonesian archipelago, this remarkable stream in the Sufi-Islamic amalgam was almost entirely absent, at least in any institutionally

elaborate form. There were no hospitals upholding a Greco-Islamic synthesis in the medical sciences; there were no great medical philosophers and scientists like Ibn Sina/Avicenna (ca. 970–1037). In their stead, there existed a complex mix of Islamic, Indic, and folk medical traditions marked by multiple "traditions of knowledge," in Barth's (1993) sense of the term. These traditions of knowledge were marked by incommensurability and polyontological tension rather than "a common paradigm of Islamic life and thought" (Ahmed 2016; cf. Boellstorff 2005) or a universally accepted "Mystic Synthesis" (Ricklefs 2007).

A second cosmological infrastructuring that seems different in the two regions had to do with the arts. Spiritual poetry abounded in Southeast Asia, and some of it, like the celebrated *suluk* literature Zoetmulder (1995) has so vividly described, voiced Akhbarian understandings of Islam's ultimate (*haqiqa*) truth. However, other arts involved in the conveyance of ultimate truths to popular audiences owed as much to *Ramayana* tales with their Indic personalities as they did Islamic saints. These popular art forms could be and often were interpreted as part of a complex Islamic spectrum (see Alatas 2021; Daniels 2009; Woodward 1989) in a manner that parallels the poetry of Khwajah Ghulam Farid described by Ahmed with its open references to Indic deities. Again, however, to speak here in Indonesia of "a common paradigm of Islamic life and thought," as Ahmed does for the Balkans-to-Bengal region, would imply a stronger measure of cosmological uniformity than the historical evidence justifies. Not merely a higher "register of divine truth" (Ahmed 2016:22), a non-scriptural religiosity hovered at the margins of at least some "Muslim" traditions in the Indonesian archipelago. Although it could not always "speak its name," this polyontological tradition remained a culturally generative force.

A third and final difference in the cultural infrastructuring of the Islamic in the Indonesian archipelago was the relatively late-ascendance – nineteenth and twentieth centuries – of an institutional equivalent of the classical Middle Eastern *madrasa*. Earlier, during Islam's first centuries in Southeast Asia, Islamic normativity had a "raja-centric" and Sufistic rather than a madrasa-based and legal-minded cast (Milner 1995:146, 217). A few Muslim scholars owned small digests that summarized a few features of Shafi'i law, the Sunni school of law long dominant across Southeast Asia. But until the rise of Islamic reform in the late nineteenth century, the careful study and robust enforcement of those legal traditions was a decidedly subordinate priority of state. However, as Feener (2007) and Lindsey (2012) have demonstrated, the widespread establishment of *pesantren* boarding schools across central and western portions of the archipelago in the nineteenth century ensured that a well-organized if at first minority wing of the Muslim community developed a lettered familiarity with Islamic shariah. In the first decades of the twentieth century, this development converged with modern print culture, new forms of civic association, and anti-colonial ferment to spur the rise of organized movements for the state-based implementation of shariah (see Chapter 7; Hefner 2000; Ricklefs 2012).

This last development may sound like an Indonesian variation on the Ahmedian theme of the modern ascent of legalist supremacism, beginning in colonial times but then continuing under the auspices of the Indonesian nation-state. In his Balkans-to-Bengal region, a key institution in this epistemological displacement, Ahmed argues, was the growing influence of the modern nation-state. Asad has similarly argued that the nation-state's "enormous emphasis on law" (2003:530) leads many modern Muslims to reimagine their tradition in a way that reinforces legal supremacist registers in the profession of Islam. But Indonesia again suggests that this historical account, and the Asadian equation of the nation-state with religious law's reification, may not be fully applicable to Indonesia.

Not long after the network of *pesantren* boarding schools had been put in place and the conditions created for what one might have expected to be legal supremacism, the movement of Islamic reform known in Indonesia as Islamic "modernism" arose in urban areas across the region (Saleh 2001). Faced with the growing threat of European colonialism, modernists in groups like the Muhammadiyah concluded that the most effective educational instrument for the improvement of the Muslim community was not the *pesantren* with its *fiqh*-centered curriculum, but the "Islamic day school" (Ind., *sekolah Islam*). With its classrooms, blackboards, and mix of general and religious instruction, the curriculum of the latter institution was modeled on Christian schools, which had been introduced in large numbers by European missionaries in the first years of the twentieth century.

It is at this point that the story of modern education, nationalism, and the hermeneutics of the Islamic in Indonesia diverges most significantly from Ahmed's Balkans-to-Bengal account. The modernist education that took hold across the Indonesian archipelago was not just a matter of blackboards, class levels, girls' education, and a curriculum that included science, mathematics, and history. Modernist education involved all these things, but it was also a project for a new approach to Islamic ethics and a new way of living as a modern Indonesian citizen (Chapter 5). Not legal supremacist, this new Islamic sought to heighten religion's transformative impact on the individual and society by linking Islam's higher aims of values – the *maqasid as-sharia*. (Chapters 1 and 7; Johnston 2007) – to modern learning, social welfare organizations, and thoroughly "modern" but still decidedly *Islamic* understandings of citizenship and social well-being (Abdullah 2017, 2020; Djamil 1995; Feener 2007).

It is too simple, then, to conclude that the resulting shift in hermeneutics associated with Islamic reformism and modernism in Indonesia ushered in an age of legal supremacism (see Saleh 2001). Notwithstanding religionizing pressures, Indonesia's quest for a new integration of Islam and Indonesian national belonging was as yet unfinished. The *nusantara* community's gaze was still open and far-ranging, notwithstanding the urgent realities of nation-making and religionizing reform. And that openness would soon draw Indonesian Muslims forward to explore other, no less expansive horizons of knowledge and social belonging.

Notes

1 In the introduction to their *A Secular Age Beyond the West: Religion, Law and the State in Asia, the Middle East and North Africa,* Mirjam Künkler and Shylashri Shankar have aptly referred to a similar phenomenon as the "differential burdening" of religion in state policies. The authors observe that the latter is "a term adopted from US Supreme court jurisprudence on free exercise, which captures the burden imposed through laws, regulations, court decisions, and practices by the state when regulating religion," thereby "effectively endorsing some tenets and practices over others" (Künkler and Shankar 2018:13–14). The concept of religionization I develop in this chapter involves much the same state-authorizing and selective privileging of certain models of religiosity over others.

2 Religionization in its *modern* varieties has evolved in parallel with the global ascendance of the modern nation-state, and in this sense it shows striking affinities with other tendencies in modern polities to "see like a state," to use James Scott's fitting phrase (Scott 1998). However, it goes without saying that the reconstruction of a spiritual tradition so as to endow it with the characteristics that state and/or societal elites identify as appropriate has long been a central feature of religious reform, not least where religious practices and authorities have been drawn into projects of state-making or empire-building. The latter processes had a transformative impact on the elaboration and formalization of Islamic legal traditions in the second and third centuries of the Islamic era (Lapidus 1996; Zubaida 2003). An even more striking example of premodern religionization occurred under the Roman Emperor Constantine after the Council of Nicosia in 325 C.E. when the empire-building ruler decided "to use the coercive powers of the state to compel acceptance of the Nicene Creed" (Drake 2009). This marked the beginning of a campaign "to create a common attitude to wards 'the Divinity' throughout the Empire," one that Constantine's religion-making successors would take further, thereby creating church-state assemblage today known as Christendom.

3 In this regard, the *abangan* in early postcolonial Indonesia show strong parallels with minorities in contemporary Turkey and the Middle East, including most notably nonstandard "syncretic" Muslims like the Alevis of Turkey. Both communities have historically opted not to place Islamic legal traditions at the core of their religiosity, and in matters of citizenship and nationalism both have tended to have a broadly "secular" and left-leaning orientation. However, although Turkey's Alevis are today the target of significant state intervention, they have survived and developed a sophisticated intellectual elite. On the Alevis, see Shankland 2003.

4 I say "East Java branch" because, as Merle Ricklefs (2012:129) has observed, the movement on which I did research in the 1980s appears to be related to the Blitar-based religious movement Raharjo Suwandi has described in his *Quest for Justice.* The movement Suwandi describes goes by the name *Agama Budha Jawi Wisnu* (Visnuite Javanese Buddhist Religion). In the course of my research in East and Central Java in the 1980s and 2000s, I encountered other small branches of this once widespread spirituality movement, including several with the slightly different word order to their name (see Suwandi 2000:147).

5 In his study of Hindus and syncretists in the Banyuwangi area of East Java, Andrew Beatty (1999:215) reports that in the twenty years that followed local Javanese conversion to Hinduism, some 40% reverted to Islam, albeit often of a still mystical variety. My own research several years later in upland districts south of Klaten in Central Java – site of some of the largest mass conversions to Hinduism in the first years of the New Order – indicated that a somewhat higher percentage of Hindu converts in that territory had reverted to Islam (Hefner 2004).

4

EXCLUSIVIST ISLAMISM AND THE "CONSERVATIVE TURN"

However future historians judge its achievement, there can be no question that the *Reformasi* transition began in May 1998 and ushered in one of the greatest transformations in politics and citizen ethics ever seen in modern Indonesia. As previous chapters have made clear, the transition was not a story of steady progress toward liberal democracy, as some Indonesian democrats had hoped. Nor was it governed by the post-Islamist turn about which Asef Bayat (2013, 2017) has written so eloquently in Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East. The transition was ideologically and organizationally heterogeneous. Its implications for Muslim politics, the nation-state, and citizen recognition were similarly mixed, not least as a result of the growing influence of exclusivist Islamist movements.

The conjunctural back and forth had its own timeline. During the first years of the transition, the country's new national leaders made headway toward the consolidation of key democratic institutions, including free and fair elections, freedom of the press, labor rights, the strengthening of a balance of powers between the executive and the legislature, and the withdrawal of the armed forces from parliament and formal politics (Purdey, Missbach, and McRae 2020:61–82). As we have seen, too, the results of the national elections held every five years from 1999 to 2019 confirmed that, although of two minds on religious freedom and the rights of minorities, a majority of the Muslim electorate preferred to prioritize government services and economic growth over broad structural change (Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018; Warburton and Aspinall 2019). In addition, and importantly for the present chapter, democratic Indonesia witnessed the continuing expansion of Muslim-based nongovernmental organizations, including those dedicated to women's rights, fair elections, and citizen equality within a Pancasila framework (Blackburn 2008; Hefner 2018; Rinaldo 2013).

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-4

On the other hand, however, and especially after the transition's buoyant early years, *Reformasi* Indonesia also witnessed mobilizations by hardline Islamists, as was most vividly illustrated in the rapid proliferation of Islamist vigilante groups. Although several of the most powerful movements benefited from the backing of old-regime oligarchs (see Mietzner 2014b, and the subsequent section), most were at first small associations based in urban and semi-urban neighborhoods where economic hardship, an upsurge in crime, and the retreat of state security forces created an aspiration and opportunity for new mechanisms of moral order and public safety. In neighborhoods affected by three decades of Islamic resurgence, the militias' invocation of the first principle of Qur'anic public ethics – "to command right and forbid wrong" (*amar makruf nahi mungkar*; see Cook 2001) – offered a reassuring message for anxious residents. Islamist vigilantes made clear, however, that in their view the affairs to which this imperative applied included not just maintaining neighborhood security but enforcing their own anti-pluralist views on Islam. As has long been reported in other regions of Southeast Asia, including Thailand and Burma, religious scripturalists of an exclusivist sort often "point to an authority found in scriptures in order to undermine religious pluralism" (Keyes, Haracre, and Kendall 1994:12; cf. Jackson 2022:50–2). That was a core ambition of the Islamist militias here in Indonesia.

Over the first decade of the *Reformasi* era, Indonesia's Islamist militias underwent their own organizational permutations. The first two years saw the establishment of hundreds of small militias. By my count no fewer than eighty Islamist militias emerged in the south-central Javanese territories around Yogyakarta and Surakarta where I was conducting research in the early 2000s. My travels to six other provinces in other parts of Indonesia during this same period (Aceh, West Sumatra, West Java, East Java, South Sulawesi, and Lombok) indicated that each of these provinces too had on average (by my count) some 25–30 Islamist militias of varied size and ambition. As the *Reformasi* era moved forward, however, several groupings gained ascendance over the others, forming large militias (*laskar*) with tens of thousands of followers. As with the Amphibi militia in Lombok (Kingsley 2010; Telle 2013), some of these were linked to non-Islamist Muslim organizations like Nahdlatul Ulama and were active in just one province or among one ethnic group. Others, however, were organized into nationwide structures under quasi-military commands. By 2005, the largest of these latter organizations, the FPI, had established branches in thirty-one of the country's thirty-four provinces and claimed a membership of ten million (Hefner 2005b; Wilson 2015). Its actual active membership numbered fewer than 100,000, but through tactical alliances and transactional deal-making it was able to mobilize like-minded militants several times that number (Bamualim 2011).

The history of the FPI illustrates the evolving entanglements of these varied militia initiatives. The FPI was founded in August 1998 at the invitation of state security officials, who were intent on creating civilian militias to back up the police

and army in the run-up to the special session of the MPR (SI-MPR) in November of that year. The special session was to lay the groundwork for national elections to take place in June 1999 of the following year (Aspinall 2005b; Hefner 2000). Most of the Jakarta-based journalists and researchers with whom I interacted during this period were confident that the notoriously ill-mannered militia would fade away once the democratic scene settled. Almost two decades later, however, the FPI showed that it was as politically potent as ever when it led the mass mobilizations of 2016–17 against the Christian Chinese governor of metropolitan Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama ("Ahok"). As we have seen, in April 2017, the governor was voted out of power and imprisoned on blasphemy charges, in what pluralism-supporting observers regarded as the nadir in *Reformasi*-era politics (see the subsequent section and Hadiz 2018; IPAC 2018).

The early years of the transition saw the emergence of other exclusivist Islamist movements, many also with militia wings. Some mobilized around campaigns for the implementation of shariah-influenced by-laws in districts and towns (see Chapter 7 and Buehler 2016; Bush 2008; Mubarak and Halimatusa'diyah 2018). Others mounted fierce attacks on Muslim minorities, including the country's small Shi'a and Ahmadiyah communities (Ali-Fauzi et al. 2011; Burhani 2019; Crouch 2014; Makin 2017b). Long renowned for its forward-looking and patriotic Muslim associations, Indonesia in the mid-2000s came to host some of the largest Islamist militias in the world.

This confluence of events led some analysts to conclude that Indonesia's Muslim community was not as democratic-minded as many observers had once thought. As we have seen, one of the most distinguished foreign analysts of Muslim Indonesia, the Dutch anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen, wrote in 2013 of a "conservative turn in Indonesian Islam" (van Bruinessen 2013a, 2013b). During the 1970s and 1980s, van Bruinessen observed, "[T]he dominant discourse was modernist and . . . embraced the essentially secular state ideology of Pancasila" and "favoured harmonious relations (and equal rights) with the country's non-Muslim minorities" (2013b:1). However, the post-Suharto years witnessed "violent inter-religious conflicts," "jihad movements," and terrorist attacks by transnational terrorist groups. Meanwhile, growing numbers of middle-class urbanites turned away from the inclusive vision of Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid toward Muslim supremacist neo-Salafism (see also IPAC 2018; Chaplin 2018, 2021; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2019; Sebastian, Hasyim, and Arifianto 2021).

In this chapter, I examine the historical background, contentious mobilization, and political impact of exclusivist Islamist movements in *Reformasi* Indonesia. My discussion pays particular attention to three of the most powerful Islamist militias. It compares the social and ideological resources each group brought to its mobilization, including the ways in which each group was associated with rival ways of knowing, promoting, and practicing Islam and Indonesian citizenship. It goes without saying that the three militias featured in this chapter are not an exhaustive inventory. All three groups – the FPI, the Laskar Jihad (*jihad militia*), and the Laskar Mujahidin of

the MMI – played leading roles in the Islamist movements of the post-Suharto era. However, and especially at the regional level, there were many other militias, some of considerable political heft (Kingsley 2010; Wilson 2015). My focus on these groups, then, reflects the simple methodological fact that these are the movements among which I happened to conduct research over the course of several years. Although not an exhaustive inventory, then, the contrasting genealogies of these groups tell us much about the social drivers for anti-democratic varieties of Islamism and some of the challenges the movement presented to Muslim Indonesians hoping to build democracy and inclusive citizen belonging.

Three themes emerge from this overview. The first is that political parties of a broadly Islamist nature have fared poorly in national elections and have shown even less ability to bring about any significant structural reform. From this perspective, and as Vedi Hadiz has similarly observed (Hadiz 2016), Indonesia's Islamists have been far less successful than their counterparts in Turkey, revolutionary Iran, and pre-Sisi Egypt. Second, in contrast with Islamist political parties' lack of success in structural politics, the scale and influence of Islamist movements *in the public sphere* grew significantly during the first fifteen years of the *Reformasi* era. Precisely because their progress in the public sphere did not also bring their ascendance into state institutions, the Islamists' societal impact has been greatest in matters of a nonstructural and ostensibly *moral* nature (cf. Jung 2020). The latter include efforts to promote exclusivist models of Islamic dress, religious education, public morality, and gendered sociality (cf. Hadiz 2016; Hoesterey 2015; Jones 2010; Qibtiyah 2021; Smith-Hefner 2019).

Islamists' limited hold on state structures underlies a third theme from this chapter's discussion. As we saw in Chapters 1 and 2, some of the most powerful state and business elites put in place in New Order Indonesia have remained solidly in place in *Reformasi* Indonesia (Hadiz 2016, 2018; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2019; Warburton and Aspinall 2019). At the same time, the routinization of national and regional elections has meant that some state officials today are keener to make deals with influential societal actors than was the case during the New Order, especially on such nonstructural matters as morals-legislation, Islamic dress codes, and shariah-oriented bylaws (Buehler 2014, 2016; Bush 2008; Feener 2013). As Bourchier (2019), Buehler (2016), and Mubarak and Halimatusa'diyah (2018) have all shown, this uncivil collaboration across the state-society divide has linked state elites with Islamist social *movements* more often than it has state elites with Muslim political *parties*. As a result, these alliances have not obliged these carryover elites to share state offices with party-based Islamists. However, as will become apparent in this chapter, the same collaboration has boosted the messaging of exclusivist Islamists in the public sphere, and the latter development has had a far-reaching effect on Muslim public ethics, as well as debates over democracy and citizen belonging.

This last point with regard to Islamism in democratic Indonesia is the most critical for understanding the paradoxes of Muslim politics and citizenship

today. Although exclusivist Islamist movements have failed to effect broad structural changes, they *have* been able to exercise significant influence in the public sphere. Building on the work of Taylor (2004), Eickelman and Salvatore (2002), as well as recent scholarship in India (Hansen 2019), I define the public sphere as "the site where contests take place over the definition of the 'common good' and also of the virtues, obligations and rights that members of society require for the common good to be realized" (Eickelman and Piscatori 1996:94; cf. Bowen 1993:13). Although often overlooked in some varieties of political-economic analysis, the public sphere is a critical arena of public deliberation in all modern societies, and its role is especially critical in matters related to the practices of social citizenship (Beaman 2016; Calhoun 1992, 1993; Fukuyama 2018; Hefner 2019).

In exploring this domain in any society, it is important to emphasize that the public sphere includes not just free and open spaces for public reasoning but social fields where struggles, sometimes violent, take place over the question of just who can participate in public discussion and who is to be excluded or marginalized. In other words, and contrary to the romantically idealized portraits of the public sphere found in some early treatments of the idea (Habermas 1989), real-and-existing public spheres are not by any means always inclusive, egalitarian, or peaceful. As with the practice of citizenship itself (Sassen 2008:65), public spheres are defined as much by the groupings they exclude as those they accommodate and authorize (Bowen 1993:13; Hefner 2011a). As Nancy Fraser and Craig Calhoun observed three decades ago (Calhoun 1993; Fraser 1992), for the first two centuries of the modern era, access to the public sphere in the West was limited to individuals of a specific gender, racial, class, and religious profile. Women and ethno-racial minorities, not to mention sexual minorities, were excluded. All this is to say that real-and-existing "public spheres" are arenas not just of discussion but of contention and political struggle. The rise of radical populism in the United States, Western Europe, Latin America, and India in the 2000s has also reminded us that public spheres in our late-modern age are often still subject to restrictions that privilege some groups, while silencing or excluding others (Beaman 2016; Gorski 2017; Hansen 2019; Whitehead, Perry, and Baker 2018).

Exclusions of this sort have been an endemic feature of public sphere dynamics here in *Reformasi* Indonesia. One of the trademarks of Islamist vigilantes like the FPI (see later) is that they have attempted to reshape Muslim public opinion not through inclusive dialogue and rational debate but through fierce populist propaganda and intimidating shows of force. The result has been the emergence of a pervasive and militant identity politics (Bernstein 2004) and an "epistemological populism" (Saurette and Gunster 2011) that "devalues complexity through rhetorical practices of simplicity, directness, and seeming self-evidence" (Brubaker 2019:36). In these and other ways, epistemological populists favor intimidation and propaganda over reasoned deliberation. Precisely as their promoters intend, these developments have worked to coarsen public reasoning and marginalize

discussion of substantive ethical values like social justice and citizen equality, values that democratic-minded Muslims regard as authentically Islamic (cf. Brubaker 2019; Calhoun, Gaonkar, and Taylor 2022).

Rather than inviting the public to assess different values and policy options, epistemological populists transform public discussion into a war of identity politics positionality. In such contests, what matters most is not deliberation on some substantive social value or religious priority, but that "our side" wins. The positional "end" in such campaigns not only justifies the political "means" but also transforms the quality and terms of public dialogue. More than structural changes in state and society or formal government legislation, then, it is these spaces of public contention and self-other-recognition that have been most significantly impacted by exclusivist Islamism and epistemological populism in the *Reformasi* era. This is to say too that, although exclusivist Islamist social movements have failed to bring about broad structural changes, they have had a pronounced effect on citizenship, social recognition, and the ways in which Muslims come to know and practice Islam. As we shall see in later chapters, however, the exclusivist Islamists' progress has also generated a principled and powerful response from Indonesia's Muslim democrats (Chapters 6 and 7).

Varieties of Islamism

In Indonesia, as in all of the world, "Islamism" comes in varied ideological forms (Bubalo and Fealy 2005:11; Cesari 2018). A small number of groups in Indonesia, like the al-Qa'eda-linked JI (see the subsequent section and Fealy 2005), are radically anti-systemic and willing to use violence to achieve their ends. A larger number of Islamist groups, including HTI (banned by the Jokowi administration in July 2017; see Ahnaf 2017, Hilmy 2021), however, are in principle nonviolent but nonetheless exclusivist and anti-systemic in ambition, in the sense that they hope through (relatively) peaceful means to build a new social order based on their anti-pluralist understanding of Islam (Ahnaf 2021; Osman 2018). Toward the democratic end of this Islamist spectrum, there is a third and even larger community of actors. These groups operate contentiously on matters of morality, deviancy, and apostasy, but are not anti-systemic with regard to political and economic structures as a whole. As with Indonesia's PKS, many of these movements subscribe to a Muslim supremacist agenda on matters of citizen belonging and religious freedom while nonetheless agreeing that a non-liberal variety of electoral democracy is compatible with Islam.

Islamists of this less politically assertive variety nonetheless retain exclusivist Islamism's three trademark commitments: promoting Muslim supremacism in matters of law and citizenship; asserting that political activism is incumbent upon all adult Muslim males (and, depending on the organization in question, Muslim women in some spheres; see Rinaldo 2013:111–54; for a Malaysian comparison, see Frisk 2009); and demanding swift and severe sanctions against religious

activities deemed deviant or heretical. As illustrated by the diverse streams of Salafism in Indonesia (see the subsequent section, and Chaplin 2018, 2021; Hasan 2006; Jamhari and Jahroni 2004; Wahid 2013), most Islamists also promote styles of religious worship, knowledge, and sociability that their proponents insist are more Islamically authentic because "divorced from any cultural, social, or . . . national reference" (Roy 2007:73). Here in Indonesia, this aspiration for a decultured and non-national profession of Islam and public ethics has put exclusivist Islamists on a collision course with mass-based associations like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. The latter groups' declarations that love of nation and commitment to *Islam Nusantara* are compatible with Islam are rejected by exclusivist Islamists as irreligious innovation (*bid'a*; see Burhani 2019).

One final trait shared by most exclusivist varieties of Islamism is their assumption that Islam is a "total" system (*al-nizam al-Islami*) and, as such, offers a comprehensive and invariant model for state and society (Bayat 2017:72; Wahid 2013; Eickelman and Piscatori 1996:42). In reality, this ostensible consensus on Islam's all-encompassing message obscures deep disagreements. As both Khan (2019:69–70) and Zubaida (2003) have emphasized, exclusivist Islamists have contradictory understandings of just what Islam specifies with regard to state and society. Similarly, although most Islamists share a commitment to state implementation of Islamic law, they disagree on precisely how the law should be formulated and under whose directive authority (Hefner 2016a, 2016b; Lindsey and Kingsley 2008).

Notwithstanding these differences, most Islamists of exclusivist persuasion agree on one key point: they imagine the shariah not as ethical commands united by certain highly generalized concerns (see Fadel 2008; Kamali 2008a:46–54) but as a body of positive law similar to the civil law implemented in Western nation-states. This is to say late-modern Islamists represent shariah as something that it has never been for most of Muslim history: a set of statutes codified by national legislatures and enforced by the disciplinary machinery of the modern bureaucratic state (Abou El Fadl 2019; Hallaq 2013, 2019; Zubaida 2003:133–5). In this regard, as in so many others, Islamists may appear "conservative" from the perspective of contemporary Western liberalism. However, in actual practice exclusivist Islamists are not conservative but promote a radical rupture with values and practices long at the heart of Muslim civilization.

Although they deployed different strategies and tactics, vigilantes became a ubiquitous presence in cities and towns across the archipelago during the first years of the *Reformasi* era. Most were organized with the declared aim of "commanding right and forbidding wrong," a long-cherished Qur'anic ethical ideal (see Qur'an 3:104), also known as *hisba* (Ind., *hisbah*; see Cook 2001). However, the vigilantes invoked the *hisba* principle in an effort not to engage in public reasoning on matters of shared ethical concern but to draw media attention to their demands and exclude or intimidate rivals. No less important, and reflecting a convergence of interests

between exclusivist Islamists and old-regime elites (Bourchier 2019; Hadiz 2018), some militias also deployed their forces to do favors for *ancien* regime political patrons. During the first twelve years of the *Reformasi* era, the militias attacked Muslim liberals, Ahmadis, and Shi'is; shut down Christian churches in Muslim-majority neighborhoods; harassed unveiled women; and ransacked cafes, brothels, and other alleged centers of vice (*maksiat*). In the eyes of exclusivist Islamists, *hisba* was intended not to advance public discussion of ethical priorities but to silence rivals and remind liberals, Muslim minorities, and non-Muslims of their lesser civic place.

Not all militia initiatives were free of state structural ambitions. From 2000 to 2001, the two largest of Indonesia's Islamist paramilitaries defied the orders of the elected president of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid (r. 1999–2001), and sent fighters to support local Muslims involved in the communal violence raging between Christians and Muslims in Maluku and Central Sulawesi (see the subsequent section and Aragon 2000; Hasan 2006; Hefner 2004). The militias' intervention dealt a severe blow to the heretofore ascendant Christian militias in those provinces – who, it must be emphasized, were every bit as aggressive as their Muslim counterparts (Aragon 2000:45–79; McRae 2013; van Klinken 2007:88–123). Several of the paramilitaries received quiet support from members of the old-regime establishment opposed to President Wahid's reformist efforts (Hasan 2006; Hefner 2005b; Jones 2013). A similar pattern of old-regime support for militia activities was a trademark feature of later Islamist mobilizations, right up through the 2016–17 campaign against the Christian Chinese governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (see Chapter 2 and the subsequent section).

Although the majority of Islamist militias were freelance locals independent of any national organization, two of the largest groups, and two of the three militias on which I came to conduct research, were nationally oriented in organization and ambition. Those groups were the FPI and the Laskar Jihad, the militia wing of the Salafist *Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunna wa Jamaah* (Communication Forum of the Followers of the Sunna and the Community of the Prophet [FKAWJ]; see Hasan 2006). At their peak, each of these organizations had thousands of members deployed in military-style battalions under a centrally coordinated command. Each also had operational bases in cities and towns across the country, rather than in just one district or province (Feillard and Madinier 2006:117–21; Jahroni 2004:197–353). In their early years and at several later junctures, these large militias also enjoyed the backing of certain members of the old-regime elite as well as at least some new elite actors. However, as we shall see, these strategic collaborations often proved highly unstable (Jamhari and Jahroni 2004). The history of the FPI illustrates the vulnerabilities of these collaborations with particular clarity and offers answers to the question of just how a handful among Indonesia's hundreds of Islamist militias were able to achieve national influence even while failing to bring about significant structural change.

Islamism Transactionalized: The Islamic Defenders Front

The FPI was established in Jakarta on August 17, 1998, under the leadership of Habib Muhammad Rizieq ibn Hussein Shihab, popularly known as Habib Rizieq. Born in August 1965, Rizieq is a religious teacher of Hadrami-Arab and Betawi (native Jakartan) descent. Rizieq hails from a respected *sayyid* family (i.e., family descended from the Prophet Muhammad) with ties to Indonesia's oldest Arab-Indonesian religious association, al-Irsyad. Established in 1915, al-Irsyad is a small reformist organization whose mission of providing educational and social welfare services to Muslims resembles that of Indonesia's largest Muslim modernist organization, the Muhammadiyah (Slama 2014). The organization differs from the latter, however, in that it has always focused its outreach on the Arab Indonesian community (Federspiel 2001:51; Mobini-Kesheh 1999:89). After Indonesia's declaration of independence in 1945, the latter community sought to counteract its Arabist image by integrating more extensively into native, *pribumi* society. One consequence of the effort was that al-Irsyad's initiatives slowed because many in the Arab Indonesian community joined more ethnically diverse Muslim organizations. Nonetheless al-Irsyad's network of well-run religious schools survived the transition and has flourished to this day. Notably, however, since the 1990s a significant minority have been drawn to Saudi-influenced Salafist ideals, albeit of a quietist rather than directly political nature.

Although Rizieq's father had played a prominent role in this and other Arab-Indonesian organizations, he passed away when Rizieq was eleven months old, leaving Rizieq's mother to support the family by working as a seamstress. In his teen years, Rizieq attended a Christian junior high school and then a state Islamic high school in Jakarta. After graduating he spent one year polishing his Arabic and studying Islamic sciences at the Institute for Islamic and Arabic Study (LIPIA, *Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Islam dan Bahasa Arab*) in Jakarta (Hasan 2006:249–53). Established by Saudi Arabian authorities in 1980 with the express purpose of promoting a Saudi version of Salafist Islam (see later), LIPIA has long been regarded as a channel for a Saudi-inflected revivalism rather than the accommodating varieties favored by its reformist counterparts in Indonesia, the Muhammadiyah and PERSIS (*Persatuan Islam*; see Federspiel 2001; Menchik 2016). Most of the institution's faculty are Saudi citizens living in Indonesia, although at the time of my last visit to the institution (January 12, 2014), I was told some 25% of the staff are Indonesian. The school principle is always a Saudi national (Bubalo and Fealy 2005:58).

LIPIA faculty and graduates whom I interviewed in 2014 and 2017 confirm that, although theologically conservative by Indonesian standards, the staff are actually varied in their political views. The majority subscribe to a politically quietist variety of Salafist reform, like that today promoted by the majority of Saudi state representatives around the world (Lacroix 2014). This Salafism foregrounds a pietism grounded in the Salafi "system" (*manhaj*; see the subsequent section and Wahid

2013) for interpreting and implementing the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunna of the Prophet. Most discourage overt political activism and counsel obedience to Muslim rulers as long as those leaders do not interfere with Islamic observance (see also Haykel 2014). However, a smaller number of LIPIA faculty blend a Salafist theology with low-key political activism, loosely modeled on the example of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (see Mitchell 1969; Wickham 2002). Still other LIPIA faculty, also a minority, are closer in orientation to mainstream varieties of Indonesian Islamic reform, similar to that associated with Muhammadiyah.

In his pioneering studies of Salafism in the Middle East, the political scientist Quintan Wiktorowicz (2004) referred to the first variety of Salafism above as "purist" because it is closer in spirit not to Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab's eighteenth-century original, which was aggressively political, but to the quietist Salafism promoted by Saudi authorities since the 1980s (Meijer 2014). Although, as we shall see, in Indonesia the Salafi religious field is undergoing significant changes (Chaplin 2018, 2021; Hasan 2006), this quietist current is still the largest and most influential.

In his global survey, Wiktorowicz distinguishes two other varieties of Salafism, both more oriented to state-based politics than the quietist center. The first, which he calls "politico" or *haraki* ("activist"), is close in spirit to Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, in that it blends Salafist piety with grassroots activism and social service provision (Wickham 2013). Wiktorowicz distinguishes this politically minded Salafism from another type, which he calls Salafi jihadist, which he identifies with transnational Islamist groups like al-Qa'eda or ISIS/Daesh. In an important study of *Salafism* in contemporary Lebanon, Zoltan Pall (2013) has pointed out that the two dominant varieties of Salafism – purist/quietists and politico-*harakis* – often benefit from the financial backing of different foundations in the Middle East. The Kuwait-based Jam'iyyat Ihya' al-Turath is a global funder of purist/quietist Salafism; it is also the largest funder of Salafism in Indonesia (see Chaplin 2021:48, 60). The Sheikh Eid Charity Foundation in Qatar is the leading funder of *haraki* Salafism in Indonesia, but it operates on a smaller scale than al-Turath.

Graduates of LIPIA are also of varied ideological orientations and have on occasion even included intellectuals of progressive Muslim persuasion. Among the more prominent of such figures is Ulil Abshar Abdallah, the founder of the progressive Liberal Islam Network (*Jaringan Islam Liberal* [JIL]) (Feillard and Madinier 2006:208) and, as of 2022, the director of Nahdlatul Ulama's flagship social service body, the Institute for the Study and Development of Human Resources (*Lembaga Kajian dan Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia*; see Chapter 7). However varied its graduates' ideological proclivities, LIPIA has been influential because since the 1980s it has provided scholarships each year to thirty of its top graduates to continue their studies at universities in Saudi Arabia (Hasan 2006:251). It was from the ranks of these students that a new generation of Salafist reformists emerged in the late 1980s, preparing the way for an even larger Salafi surge in the 1990s.

As Rizieq's career shows, however, not all who pass through LIPIA corridors remain faithful to mainstream Salafi teachings. As with Rizieq, some engage in outreach that mixes traditionalist and even Sufi devotional styles with a populist Salafi rhetoric. Like its counterparts in Erdogan's Turkey (Yilmaz 2021), this Islamic populism foregrounds a "civilizationalist" narrative that emphasizes that the primary political division in today's world is that which poses authentic Muslims against the forces of "anti-Islamic" perfidy in the West and other lands like Russia and the People's Republic of China (see also Barton, Yilmaz, and Morieson 2021; Hadiz 2016).

Although Rizieq regularly taps into this clash-of-civilization rhetoric, his segment in the Islamist religious market leads him to devote greater discursive attention to national issues. This is the case because, with a few notable exceptions like HTI (Ahnaf 2011, 2021; Osman 2018), domestic issues still have greater purchase in Indonesia's Muslim community than those internationalist. At the heart of Rizieq's right-wing nationalist narrative is a robust mix of fierce anti-communism and anti-liberalism – themes also dear to the hearts, one should note, of the ultraconservative wing of the armed forces and political elite (Bourchier 2019; Robinson 2018; Warburton and Aspinall 2019). At the top of this menu of domestic concerns is Rizieq's commitment to a Muslim supremacist variety of citizen belonging.

Known as a bright but headstrong student, Rizieq impressed his teachers at LIPIA and was awarded a fellowship for college study in Islamic education and jurisprudence at the King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. There too the young Rizieq excelled in his studies. In the years following his return from Saudi Arabia, Rizieq worked as a teacher and (after 1996) schoolmaster at the Jami'at Khair madrasa in Tanah Abang, central Jakarta, and was active in a social organization of the same name. I met with him briefly at the school in August 1997, a year before his rise to national prominence. Both of these latter organizations devote most of their outreach to Indonesia's small Arab-Indonesian community. More significant for his imminent turn to political activism, during these years Rizieq also became a prominent preacher in a network of Islamic study groups in metropolitan Jakarta. It was during this period that, while conducting research in Jakarta, I also made the acquaintance of several close followers of Rizieq.

Known in Indonesian as *pengajian* or *majelis taklim*, since the 1990s Islamic study circles of this sort have been one of the most socially consequential features of the Islamic resurgence (Chaplin 2021:43; Pribadi 2020; Winn 2012). Although some study groups operate under the direction of preachers with ties to the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (as with the celebrated Sufi master, Habib Muhammad Luthfi, b. 1947; see Alatas 2021), the wildfire spread of *majelis taklim* has ensured that a large portion of informal Islamic study today takes place under the auspices of preachers working independently of those two organizations and with different approaches to Islam and citizen belonging. A no less important feature of the study-circle phenomenon is that it is the one sphere of pietistic study

in which the levels of participation by Muslim women exceed those of Muslim men. As Winn (2012:3; see also van Doorn-Harder 2006:215–18) has reported, the chairwoman of the national association of women's *majelis taklim* claimed that her organization had no fewer than fourteen million women members.

Known for his charismatic oratory, by the late 1990s Rizieq had achieved celebrity status in the Jakarta-centered study-circle network in which he operated. Well before he began his militia activities, I attended several of these study-circle rallies. In each event, I was struck less by any political message – at this point Rizieq made few overt references to national politics – than by the uncharacteristically heated style of his oratory. Although theologically conservative by Indonesian standards, the network through which Rizieq conducted his study groups was neither politically extreme nor consistently Salafist in orientation. As my interviews with alumni of the network in Jakarta in the early 2000s revealed, the study circle's leadership included a significant number of Muslim traditionalists, drawn from the socially conservative but otherwise mainstream wing of Nahdlatul Ulama (cf. Feillard and Madinier 2006:117–20). In the poor urban neighborhoods in West Java and Banten where I saw Rizieq in action, this latter constituency is significantly larger than the nationalist and progressive wings so prominent at NU's national headquarters in Jakarta (cf. Bamualim 2015; Lanti, Akim, and Dermawan 2021:51, 55).

Colleagues of Rizieq whom I interviewed in the early 2000s also reported that his involvement in the Jakarta-area study circles had led the young preacher to downplay the Salafi devotional styles he had studied in Saudi Arabia and foreground traditionalist observances, similar to those favored in NU circles. Remarkably, for example, in January 2002 students from Rizieq's study circle told me that they had regularly sponsored simple Sufi liturgies, an activity strongly frowned upon by strict Salafis. The ritual observances included supplemental prayers, litanies, and expressions of praise for the Prophet Muhammad (Ind., *salawat*), drawn, I was told, from the Tijaniyya Sufi order (cf. Ricklefs 2012:422; van Bruinessen 1999; Zamhari 2008). The FPI organization has also welcomed Sunni Muslims from varied educational and devotional backgrounds. The only precondition was that applicants identify as "People of the Prophetic Tradition and Community" (*Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*; ASWAJA) and agree with the FPI's mission of commanding right and forbidding wrong – and do so while deferring to the leadership of Habib Rizieq. Consistent with the ideologically thin nature of populist politics in many parts of the world (see Stanley 2008), this pattern of personalist deference to a commanding charismatic figure loomed larger for many of Rizieq's followers than did any doctrinal program.

Although this background history demonstrates that in matters of ritual observance Rizieq did not consistently present himself as a Salafist, from early on many officials in Nahdlatul Ulama's national headquarters suspected that Rizieq was hiding his true ideological colors. Many shared the judgment of the prominent NU preacher, scholar, Sufi, and public intellectual Sahal Mahfudh, "FPI was set up by *Habibs* [Arab Indonesians claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad],

so it is not NU. . . . Those FPI characters are Wahhabi" (Ricklefs 2012:422). The allegation that Rizieq is actually a Wahhabi in ASWAJA garb was to be heard with even greater frequency after 2000, as Rizieq began to make his national ambitions clearer. Rizieq's coarse public insults of President Abdurrahman Wahid (r. 1999–2001); his militia's clashes with members of the NU youth organization, Ansor; his supporters' attacks on progressive Muslims and non-Muslim liberals in the "Monas Incident" in 2008 (see later); and his organization's tactical alliance from 2014 to 2019 with the transnational Islamist organization, HTI, all served to harden NU attitudes toward the preacher. Rizieq's accommodations in matters of religious observance, many concluded, had less to do with doctrinal flexibility than his determination to steal followers from his Nahdlatul Ulama rivals.

From Scholar-Preacher to Populist Vigilante

A calculus of this sort does seem to have informed Rizieq's strategy for launching himself into national prominence. In his writings and in his interview with me, Rizieq always made clear that he regards democracy as antithetical to Islam. He has voiced even stronger opposition to the Pancasila's emphasis on citizen equality for Indonesians of all recognized religions, as well as to any suggestion that non-mainstream Muslims like the Ahmadis should be tolerated on grounds of citizenship rights or religious freedom. Public opinion surveys indicate that the idea that religious minorities like the Ahmadis should *not* be provided with legal protections on constitutional grounds is an opinion shared by the majority of Indonesian Muslims. It is one of the most glaring examples of just where popular Muslim opinion, even in proudly nationalist circles, tends to depart from international human rights norms (see Chapter 5; Menchik 2016).

Even as he took exception to some features of Indonesian citizenship, Rizieq has always taken care to display nationalist colors, not least those having to do with questions of Indonesia's territorial integrity. Rizieq peppers his speeches with references to the nationalist acronym popular in government and armed forces circles known as *Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia* (NKRI) – the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Most Indonesians associate this phrase with an implicit rejection of transnational Islamism, as well as opposition to the ethno-nationalist insurgencies that have erupted periodically in the archipelago (cf. Bourchier 2019). In the 2010s, however, as his fame grew, Rizieq qualified his pledge of national allegiance by explaining that the unitary republic he favored was not just the existing Indonesian nation-state but an "NKRI *yang bersyariah*" ("a unitary Indonesia based on shariah"). He thereby signaled his loyalty to the project of Indonesian nationalism. But he also made clear that in matters of law and citizenship the nation's commitment to Pancasila equality would have to give way to an unqualified Muslim supremacism (see Munabari 2018).

Ideological sleights of hand of this sort were to remain trademarks of Rizieq's messaging in the later phases of his career and represented a significant departure

from the more measured preaching of his youth. Shortly after the emergence of ISIS/Daesh in Syria and Iraq in 2014, Rizieq released a statement to the online Muslim journal, *panjimas.com*. The statement made clear that Rizieq sought to strike a balance between outreach to the nationalist-minded public and knowing winks to anti-democratic Islamists. His statement condemned ISIS for its brutality, especially against Shi'i (FPI 2014). But Rizieq went on to say that he "fully supported the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate, in keeping with the model of the Prophet (*manhaj Nubuwwah*)." More startling yet, he urged all Indonesian Muslims to heed the instructions of Shaykh Ayman al-Zawahiri (b. 1951–2022), the Egyptian activist who led al-Qa'eda from shortly after the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011 until his own death by American drone strike in 2022. The declaration finished by calling on Muslims to join with "all of the al-Qa'eda components as well as the forces of Muhammad al-Jaulani in Syria and those of Abu Bakar al-Baghadi in Iraq" so as to "unite in brotherhood so as to continue the jihad in Syria and Iraq without killing civilians that have done no wrong" (see Facal 2020). The study-circle scholar-preacher from Tanah Abang, Jakarta, had taken a sharp ideological turn indeed.

Rather than Salafist or revivalist purity, Rizieq's prioritization of tough-guy Islamism over programmatic consistency was also influenced by the deeply transactional nature of street-oriented politicking in Indonesia in the late Suharto and early Reformasi years. Like many militant activists operating in the nation's capital, in the late 1990s Rizieq realized that the New Order regime's policy on Islam had changed and that some in the ruling elite were now eager to recruit street-savvy Islamists to campaigns against leftist students, human rights activists, and liberal Muslims. This was in fact a core message of one of the prayer-meeting rallies organized by Rizieq that I attended in Banten in early 1998.

The circumstances surrounding the FPI's establishment illustrate the forces shaping Rizieq's shift in priorities all the more clearly, as I discovered in interviews with FPI activists from 1998 to 2004. During the first months of 1998, and as part of a broader regime outreach to Islamists conducted by Suharto allies, an Arab Indonesian businessman with long-standing ties to al-Irsyad was recruited by Suharto advisors to serve as an intermediary for outreach to Rizieq. During these weeks Indonesia was in the throes of severe economic crisis. Cities were racked by food shortages and rioting; the coalition mobilizing to oust Suharto was also steadily gaining ground (Aspinall 2005a; Hefner 2000). In this context, the al-Irsyad businessperson, an affable gentleman whom I had known since the early 1990s, was urged to approach the young preacher and ask him whether he would be willing to join a campaign in support of the embattled president. Although he confided to me that he actually knew otherwise, and even sympathized with many of the protestors' demands, the intermediary made public statements in which he described the democracy movement as "Christian and communist" in inspiration. According to reports of the closed-door meeting that I received from a Muslim journalist who attended the event, Rizieq accepted the offer from this Suharto intermediary but

also demanded that he be given a central leadership position in the campaign. The president's representative agreed. Over the next five months, Rizieq went on to play a central role in organizing more than a dozen demonstrations against pro-democracy activists (Jamhari and Jahroni 2004:129–60).

This street mobilization was the first big step in Rizieq's reorientation away from his primary involvement in *da'wa* study circles to rough-and-tumble vigilantism. In other words, even before the formal establishment of the FPI in August 1998, Rizieq had begun to put in place a regime-friendly network that extended well beyond his study-circle base. His appeals also displayed the anti-intellectualism and epistemological coarsening characteristic of populist mobilizations in many lands (Saurette and Gunster 2011). The down-market nature of Rizieq's rhetoric was also a response to the fact that, rather than appealing to colleagues in his study-circle network, he now recruited followers from among the petty hooligans and neighborhood enforcers known in Indonesia as *preman* (Ryter 1998). *Preman* have been a feature of Indonesian politics since the first years of the republic, but they became especially prominent in urban settings in the *Reformasi* era. As the anthropologist Ian Wilson has demonstrated, most *preman* are neighborhood toughs who combine small-scale criminality with neighborhood watch programs and hooligan-for-hire security services (Wilson 2008, 2015).

After the establishment of the FPI on August 17, 1998, Rizieq made no secret of the underworld background of some of his associates, since this fact only enhanced his militia's reputation as an intimidating street-fighting force. However, the gangland reputation also fueled allegations, regularly confirmed by Jakarta journalists (and admitted by several of the FPI supporters I came to know), that many of the FPI's attacks on bars, discothèques, and brothels were motivated as much by the desire to secure protection money as they were combatting vice. The petty-criminal tag did not apply, however, to Rizieq himself. Whatever favors he extended to his gangland allies, Rizieq himself has always lived modestly. In the early 2000s, he resided in a small home in central Jakarta, drove an unstylish car, and appeared to have few if any of the underworld business ventures other militia leaders enjoyed. This was one of the few features of scholarly refinement (*adab*) that Rizieq retained as he transitioned from study-circle scholar to street-fighting populist.

A second critical juncture in Rizieq's transition from local preacher to power-playing vigilante occurred in the final weeks of 1998. With Suharto now removed from power, the period saw an escalating rivalry between supporters of Suharto's designated successor, B.J. Habibie, and an unwieldy alliance of pro-democracy nationalists identified in the Indonesian media as the "rainbow" (*pelangi*) coalition. In this context of growing factionalism among state elites, Rizieq again saw an opportunity. According to information provided by one of Rizieq's personal assistants, the Armed Forces Commander General Wiranto and the chief of police for the capital district, Nugroho Jayussman, jointly approached Rizieq and invited him to assume the leadership of a semi-governmental paramilitary known as the "Voluntary Security Guards" or Pam Swakarsa (*Pasukaan Pengamam Swakarsa*).

The Security Guards were a militia force of 30,000 civilians designed to back up the 120,000 police and soldiers who were to be deployed to protect the November 1998 meeting of the Special Session of the People's Representative Assembly (SI-MPR). The Special Session was to be convened to lay the ground rules for the elections of June 1999, the first to be held since Suharto's resignation.

It is important to note that if these reports are accurate, it is unlikely that General Wiranto reached out to Rizieq for reasons of ideological affinity. By 1996, when I first met the pleasant-mannered general in a private setting in central Jakarta, the Indonesian armed forces had developed a sharp internal divide between so-called red and white officers, seen as Pancasila nationalists, and "green" (*ijo*) officers willing to engage in outreach to Islamist groupings (Mietzner 2009; Sulistiyo 2001). Wiranto was one of the few generals willing and able to bridge the divide between the two camps. Moreover, although he remained a Suharto loyalist to the end, as the New Order regime entered its tumultuous final phase Wiranto urged presidential advisors to initiate dialogue with the anti-Suharto opposition. As I learned from several of those activists, and as the general himself indicated in a conversation with me in January 1998, Wiranto also met privately on several occasions with the pro-democracy opposition. In government circles, he made a point of rejecting calls for a violent crackdown in a manner that contrasted with his main rival in the army command, Lieutenant General Prabowo Subianto (Aspinall 2005a:223; Sulistiyo 2001). Years later, under the administration of President Joko Widodo (r. 2014–24), Wiranto would serve as minister of security and emerge once again as one of the main advocates for building a broad-based coalition against anti-national Islamists, including in this late instance Rizieq's FPI (cf. Bourchier 2019).

At rallies held in the run-up to the November 1998 special session, Rizieq denounced Habibie's pro-democracy opponents as communists. He urged the Guard members to be prepared to give their lives in defense of Islam and the nation (van Dijk 2001:340–4). When the Security Volunteers poured into the city on November 9, they planned to focus their attacks on pro-democracy students. But the vigilantes unwittingly ran afoul of residents in several poor neighborhoods. More than a dozen people died in the resulting clashes. In the end, the Security Volunteers' efforts came to naught. In October 1999, President Habibie's accountability speech to a general session of the MPR was rejected by a slim majority of delegates, opening the way for the MPR to choose Abdurrahman Wahid (r. 1999–2001) as president.

Although his support for the embattled President Habibie did not achieve his sponsors' aims, the events of 1998–9 nonetheless completed an important shift in Rizieq's political career. No longer was Rizieq just a celebrated if fiery preacher in a local network of religious study circles. He had catapulted himself onto the national scene, securing his place as the country's most feared vigilante commander. The proponent of epistemological populism also made clear his opposition to the reform-minded discourses promoted in the country's State Islamic University System (Chapters 2 and 5). More important yet, Rizieq had also developed a keen

eye for tactical bargains with actors in Indonesia's now factionalized governing elite. In June 2000, the FPI ransacked the headquarters of the National Commission on Human Rights when the latter issued statements implicating members of the army command (including General Wiranto) in the 1999 violence in East Timor. In March and April 2001, the FPI joined with Islamist political parties and the former ruling Party, Golkar, in a campaign against an allegedly resurgent communism (Hefner 2005b:284–6). Anti-communist appeals – typically directed against youthful human rights activists rather than ideological Marxists – were to remain a trademark of FPI appeals from this period to 2020 and served as a point of ideological convergence between Rizeq and old-regime politicians (Bourchier 2019; Heryanto 2018).

During this same period, Rizieq continued to press forward on matters of a sectarian nature. On November 2, 1999, several hundred FPI activists burned a Protestant church south of the capital. On December 13, 1999, 4,000 FPI militants broke into and occupied Jakarta City Hall, demanding that the city government close discos, cinemas, restaurants, and massage parlors during the Muslim fasting month. On October 10, 2000, hundreds of FPI militants announced their intention to attack a delegation of Israelis scheduled to visit Indonesia for the 104th Inter-Parliamentary Union conference. The FPI also spearheaded mass demonstrations against the United States after that country's invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001.

Some of these actions eventually led to confrontations with the metropolitan police. In December 2000 (during the Wahid presidency), the police command in Jakarta announced that it would no longer tolerate FPI's unilateral actions against cafes, restaurants, and bars. A day later, machete-wielding FPI members invaded a government housing complex in North Jakarta, only to be repelled by its residents. On December 11, 2000, the police used harsher tactics, firing bullets into the tires of a van carrying attackers who had just ransacked four entertainment centers in West Jakarta and were hauling away five air conditioners. Angered by the police action, on December 13, hundreds of FPI militants attacked a police station east of the capital, injuring three officers. The next day FPI members attacked a legal prostitution complex in Subang, West Java, killing a security guard. Angry local residents reacted by burning down the house of the district FPI leader. As the police escalated their crackdown in early 2001, the FPI temporarily scaled back its attacks on alleged centers of vice. Rizieq then redirected his attention toward the growing campaign against President Wahid. Once Wahid was forced from power in July 2001, however, the FPI resumed its "anti-vice" targeting. Rizieq also began to proclaim more loudly than ever that the only solution to Indonesia's ills lay in state implementation of his variety of Islamic law.

After Megawati Sukarnoputri's (r. 2001–4) ascension to the presidency on July 23, 2001, relations between military and state elites improved significantly (Mietzner 2009:224–8). As Bourchier (2019:718) has observed, "Sukarno's first daughter threw in her lot with the resurgent military who were happy to support

her in exchange for a high degree of institutional autonomy." With the signing of the Malino II peace accord in February 2002, the conflict in Maluku was also sufficiently contained as to not again figure in intra-elite rivalries in Jakarta. No less important, some in the leadership of the national police had grown impatient with FPI raids, and opposition from other Muslim groupings, especially the Nahdlatul Ulama, had stiffened. In these years, then, a new if still incomplete consensus emerged in national circles that, as one former New Order police official told me in July 2002, "Rizieq is causing more trouble than he is worth." In 2003, Rizieq was sentenced to seven months in prison for inciting his followers to attack nightspots in Jakarta. After his release from prison in early 2004, Rizieq realized that his situation was more precarious than he had realized, and he resolved to seek out new national patrons. His best prospects for partnership, he concluded, lay with the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI).

As noted in Chapter 2, the MUI in the early *Reformasi* period had sought to shed its reputation for being too pliant toward the state and remake itself as an independent actor in Muslim civil society. It sought in particular to assume the leadership on all matters of Islamic doctrine, morality, and interfaith relations (Hasyim 2014). "Commanding right" was to be the MUI's pathway to a commanding role in Islamic affairs as a whole (see later). In this new climate, Rizieq concluded that his own career might best get back on track by being hitched to the wagon of a newly ascendant MUI.

Unsteady Allies: The FPI and the Indonesian Council of Ulama

After Suharto's fall, the new leadership of the MUI concluded that during the New Order period it had squandered much of its public authority by acting too pliantly toward state officials. The MUI had been established at the urging of Suharto in 1975. The council was initially designed to serve as a liaison between the military-dominated government and mainstream representatives of the Muslim community (Hooker 2003:60). Notwithstanding several notable moments of dissent (see Mudzhar 1993:122), for most of the New Order the MUI had worked closely with the Suharto government, and the organization came to be widely seen as "the bureaucratisation of Islam . . . in its most extreme form" (Hooker 2003:60).

In the more open and agonistic religious market of the *Reformasi* era, the MUI leadership quickly realized that state-society-religion relations in Indonesia had changed, and the MUI risked being outflanked by the country's new crop of Muslim televangelists (Hoesterey 2015, 2017), neo-Sufi gurus (Howell 2008), and Muslim Brotherhood–inspired activists (Bubalo and Fealy 2005:65–90; Machmudi 2006). Faced with these challenges, the MUI leadership resolved from 2000 onward to distance itself from state officials and rebrand itself as a boldly independent, nongovernmental organization. At its national congress in that year – and motivated in part by its leadership's growing opposition to the liberalizing policies of Abdurrahman Wahid (Ichwan 2013:13; Gillespie 2007) – the MUI formally

announced that its primary role was no longer to be a "servant of the government" (*khadim al-hukumah*) but a servant of the Muslim community (*khadim al-ummah*). Over the next five years, the council extended its authority into new social fields, including national education and the lucrative enterprises of Islamic banking and *halal* certification. The primary role the MUI was determined to play, however, was guardian of Islamic morals and orthodoxy.

As part of these rebranding efforts, the MUI secured its primary base among Islamic scholars in Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and the other mainstream organizations from which MUI scholars had long been recruited. However, breaking with precedent, the MUI executive also reached out to exclusivist Islamist organizations, including small but militant groups like Indonesia's Muslim Brotherhood, HTI (see Chapter 2; Ahnaf 2011, 2017, 2021; Osman 2018), and the MMI (see later and Ahnaf 2021; Umam 2006).

The MUI's new tack was tactically revealing in two regards. The first was that progressive Muslims like those associated with the Network of Liberal Islam (*Jaringan Islam Liberal* [JIL]; see Feillard and Madinier 2006; Nurdin 2005) were deliberately excluded from the now widened MUI tent (Ichwan 2013:64; Hasyim 2014). Progressive *ulama* who already sat on the Ulama council, like Masdar Masudi (a NU scholar of jurisprudence, specializing in matters of gender, law, and *zakat* whom I have known since the 1990s; see also Kersten 2015:61) and Siti Musdah Mulia (one of Indonesia's most distinguished Muslim feminists), were not forced from the council. But they "were never involved in decision making" (Ichwan, ibid.). These measures were part of a well-managed campaign "to cleanse the MUI of all liberal ideas and of the scholars who support them" (Ichwan 2013:65). The second striking feature of MUI outreach was that activists in exclusivist Islamist groupings like HTI were not merely recruited to the council but were given influential positions in its leadership. It was in this spirit that no less vocal an opponent of "Christianization" (*Kristenisasi*) than Adian Husaini (b. 1965) – an intellectually brilliant but fierce anti-pluralist (see Chapter 1; Husaini and Hidayat 2002) – was appointed to sit on the MUI's Commission for Harmonious Relations among Religious Communities.

Consistent with its self-declared identity as a defender of Sunni orthodoxy, the MUI also held national and regional conferences, in which its leaders rallied Muslims to causes favored by exclusivist Islamists and others unhappy with what they described as the growth of "deviancy" and liberalism in *Reformasi* Indonesia. The causes the MUI began to prioritize included the banning of proselytization by Ahmadis, curbs on Christian church building, and crackdowns on deviationist groupings on charges of religious defamation (Bagir 2013; Crouch 2014; Fenwick 2017). To consolidate its grassroots networks and build a strike force for enforcing its rulings, the MUI also reactivated the militia associated with the Forum for Islamic Unity (*Forum Ukhuwah Islamiyah* [FUI]). The FUI had been established under MUI auspices in 1989 but then became relatively inactive. The revitalized

FUI of the *Reformasi* era recruited heavily from among the ranks of Islamist vigilantes, including the FPI (Munabari 2018).

In 2005, the national MUI issued several religious rulings (*fatwa*) and clarifications (*tausiyah*) that made clear its priorities on matters of Islam and public ethics. The council reiterated its long-standing ruling banning interreligious marriages. This ban had been in place since the 1980s and, although criticized by Muslim progressives, enjoyed strong support (more than 80% in my survey of 1,000 Muslim educators; Hefner 2009) among educators and the Muslim public (Chapter 3). The MUI also reiterated another of its earlier rulings, declaring that it was forbidden for Muslims to participate in interreligious prayer meetings. Interfaith activities of this sort had been a staple of peacebuilding efforts in the early *Reformasi* era. As I saw in Yogyakarta and Jakarta in the late 2000s, however, their scale and frequency plummeted after the MUI ruling.

Two other among the MUI's 2005 rulings proved even more controversial than these first two. The first was the declaration mentioned in Chapter 2, which renewed the MUI's 1980 call for the government to ban the Ahmadiyah movement. The latter appeal was not unexpected. Earlier, at its National Congress in 2000, the MUI had issued a statement in which it had called for a campaign against thirteen varieties of "reprehensible acts" (*munkarat*); religious "deviation" sat at the top of the list. From 2002 onward, the FPI and other militias associated with the FUI had invoked the MUI declaration to justify escalating their attacks on Ahmadis.

The second MUI fatwa from the 2005 Congress denounced "liberalism, secularism, and religious pluralism" as deviant (*sesat*) from any proper profession of Islam (Chapter 2; Gillespie 2007; Ichwan 2013). The declaration was greeted with dismay in Muslim democrat circles. Several senior Muslim scholars, including the late Azyumardi Azra of the Hidayatullah State Islamic University (in personal conversation with me in December 2005), described the statement as intellectually incoherent, because it was based on a serious misreading of academic scholarship on all three subjects.

In fact, not everyone even in the MUI leadership was pleased with the latter declaration. A year after the ruling's release (March 12, 2006) I had a three-hour dinner with the vice chairman of the MUI, Din Syamsuddin, the former chairperson of the Muhammadiyah and a politically ambitious but intellectually gifted scholar whom I had known since the 1990s. Syamsuddin made clear that, although he still agreed with the broader "aim" (Ind. *maksud*) of the MUI declaration, in retrospect he felt that it had been crafted in a careless manner. He acknowledged that the definition of "pluralism" used in the fatwa erred in equating the concept with the belief that all religions are equally true. He also conceded that the MUI case against secularism was poorly formulated.

> We all know that the view that religion may have no role in politics and public life is contrary, not just to Islam, but to the Pancasila. So secularism is not so serious a problem in Indonesia that the MUI had to address it as such.

Interestingly, Syamsuddin added, it was on the matter of liberalism that the MUI discussion had been especially reckless, for reasons having to do with ongoing international developments:

> Some of the members involved in our discussions used the term "liberal" as a synonym for "Western countries." With Bush's invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq there was a good deal of frustration and anger toward the United States and the Western alliance. But others were irritated with American and Western agencies because since the fall of the Suharto government many Western foundations had meddled so directly with religious affairs in Indonesia. They did so by lending support to small groups of young activists, like the Network of Liberal Islam (JIL), as if these groups were the real leaders of Indonesian Muslims.

Din Syamsuddin was not the only person to voice concerns like these about American overreach and alleged Western meddling in Muslim affairs. In a conversation I had had in July of the same year at a conference in Jakarta, the late Hasyim Muzadi (1944–2017) had voiced the same opinion. The well-respected and nationalist-minded director of the al-Hikam Islamic boarding school in Malang, East Java (see Lukens-Bull 2005), Muzadi had succeeded Abdurrahman Wahid as the director of the executive committee (*Tanfidziyah*) of the Nahdlatul Ulama. When, during a long break from conference proceedings, I asked him his opinion of the JIL and its ongoing campaign for religious tolerance, Muzadi responded bluntly:

> Although they claim to speak for NU and Indonesian Muslims, these liberal activists don't really have a broad base of support in NU or any where else. They are "funding cadres" [Ind., *kader funding*] created by Western donors, and do not have any significant following here.

The general consensus among progressive Muslims in Indonesia during the years following the MUI fatwa was that the declaration's primary target had indeed been the small network of progressive-minded scholars associated with the JIL. Established in 2001 by an alliance of young intellectuals and democratic activists, JIL's bold campaigns in support of a pluralism and an "Islam of many colors" (*Islam warna-warni*; see Sirry 2004) had generated a firestorm of opposition, even among the rank and file of the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. Hardline critics had gone further. On December 26, 2002, a little-known network of West Java-based *ulama*, known as the *Forum Ulama Umat Islam* (Forum for Ulama of the Islamic Ummat, FUUI), issued a *fatwa* declaring that the "blood" of those who defame the Allah, the Prophet, and the Muslim community was "halal" – that is, religiously allowed.

Although not mentioned by name, it was widely assumed in Jakarta circles that the intended target of this threat was JIL's chief spokesperson, Ulil Abshar-Abdalla. During a visit to Boston that same year, Ulil told me that he too was convinced that

this was the case, and he had been obliged to take precautions to guarantee his family's safety. Harsh sanctions against those alleged to have defamed the Prophet Muhammad have extensive precedent in classical Islamic jurisprudence (see Saeed 2015). However – and notwithstanding the horrific violence unleashed against alleged communists in 1965–1966 – this was the first time in modern Indonesian history that any Muslim organization has called for the killing of a Muslim public intellectual on grounds of blasphemy (Ichwan 2013:81; Feillard and Madinier 2006:208–10).

In the months following the FUUI's threat, Hussein Umar (1941–2007), the blunt-talking head of the DDII, and his junior assistant, Adian Husaini, organized rallies calling for JIL and "liberal Islam" to be condemned as doctrinally deviant (*sesat*). Exclusivist Islamists interpreted the MUI fatwa as including not just Muslim progressives but Muslim intellectuals who had played a leading public role in the early *Reformasi* era, including Dawam Rahardjo and Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif of Muhammadiyah, Abdurrahman Wahid and Siti Musdah Mulia of NU, and Syafi'i Anwar, a journalist and founding director of the International Center for Islam and Pluralism. In August 2005, Dawam Rahardjo (whom I had known since 1993) told me that he felt that the MUI had been hijacked by a minority among its leadership intent on silencing "pluralist" voices like his. Many longtime Indonesian observers agreed. They were convinced that the MUI's larger aim was "to delegitimize a much broader category of Muslim intellectuals and NGO activists, including some of the most respected Muslim personalities of the previous decades" (Bruinessen 2013b:4).

However complex the MUI's internal politics, its actions bore witness to two ongoing shifts in Muslim politics and society. The first was that the always-tenuous coalition of state officials and Muslim democrats that spearheaded religion-related reforms in the early *Reformasi* period had now been pushed out of positions of authority in the state executive. The second shift was that street-savvy Islamists were collaborating now more than ever with the anti-liberal political elite who had carried over from the New Order period. Equally significant, the exclusive Islamists were determined to use their collaboration to realize their goal of capturing the commanding heights of the Islamic public sphere (cf. Bourchier 2019; Buehler 2016; Hadiz 2018).

Escalation Calculations: Presidential Politics and Islamist Mobilization

It was against this unfolding political backdrop, then, that Rizieq and the FPI sought to position themselves as enforcers-in-chief of MUI declarations. In private conversations, many Jakarta-based MUI officials, including Din Syamsuddin, told me that Rizieq never bothered to request MUI authorization for any of his actions; he acted unilaterally. Indeed, many in the MUI leadership said privately that they viewed the FPI as infringing on its authority for the sole purpose of advancing Rizieq's political career.

A critical juncture in the FPI's reframing of its national mission occurred in the aftermath of the MUI's 2005 fatwa against the Ahmadiyah movement. Founded in Pakistan in the late nineteenth century, the Ahmadiyah is a Muslim sect regarded as heretical by many Sunni Muslims. Since the 1980s, the organization has been the target of a global campaign by Saudi officials and even mainstream Sunni groups who object to the fact that Ahmadis recognize their founder as a "renewer" of Islam; a minority current within the movement even regards him as a Prophet (Burhani 2013a). The controversy surrounding the organization is not new. In 1929, just four years after the Ahmadiyah's establishment of an organizational bureau in the Dutch East Indies, Muhammadiyah executives had issued a *fatwa* branding the Ahmadis as heretical. In 1980, the MUI called for the government to ban the Ahmadi organization outright. As we have seen, the MUI reiterated the appeal in its 2005 declaration (Hasyim 2011; Gillespie 2007; Olle 2009).

The 1980 declaration had been issued at the height of New Order power, and, consistent with the nature of state-society-religion regulation at this time, the Suharto government had ignored the appeal. The 2005 declaration, however, was issued in an entirely different political climate. The initial wave of *Reformasi* progressivism had peaked. Both Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri had finished their presidential terms, and, rather than consolidating a progressive Muslim base, both had unintentionally accelerated its decline. By contrast, after years of painstaking mobilization in the provinces, exclusivist Islamists had put national networks securely in place, and these were now ready for deployment in mobilizational campaigns (see Rinaldo 2013).

It was against this changing national backdrop that Rizieq and the FPI inaugurated a new chapter in their effort to capture the Muslim public sphere. In July 2005, the organization took the lead in a violent assault on one of the Ahmadiyah's largest compounds, its training campus at Parung, Bogor in West Java. The details of the planned attack had been prepared by a small watchdog group established in 1980 and known as the Institute for Islamic Study and Research (LPPI, *Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam*). LPPI was an anti-heresy organization established and directed by M. Amin Djamaluddin, whose acquaintance I had made back in 1994. An intelligent but fiercely anti-pluralist thinker, Djamaluddin has also long been active in the Indonesian Council of Islamic Predication (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* [DDII]) and the Persatuan Islam (*Persis*, Federspiel 2001). Not a militia but a policy-advising organization, LPPI for most of the New Order exercised no significant influence on state regulations on religion. When I first spoke with him in 1994, Djamaluddin complained bitterly of his inability to get government officials to take his recommendations seriously. However, in the more contentious environment of *Reformasi* Indonesia, LPPI found a receptive ear in government circles, especially after the inauguration of Megawati's successor, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (b., 1949; r. 2004–2014) in October 2004.

The Yudhoyono Presidency (2004–14) and the FPI's Ascent

A politely mannered man who had earned a reputation as a military reformer in the last year of Suharto rule (when I first met him), Yudhoyono as president played a key role in leading the government to abandon its even-handed stance on Muslim organizations and recognize the MUI as the primary advisor to government on Islamic affairs. It was Yudhoyono who appointed Ma'ruf Amin to the Presidential Advisory Council on Religious Affairs (Burhani 2013a:199). Unassuming in bearing, intellectually brilliant, and politically ambitious, Amin was from the anti-liberal wing of NU that had sought to reassert itself after the ouster of Abdurrahman Wahid from the presidency. Amin had long championed the idea of integrating Islamic legal traditions into national law, and he had played a key role in the formulation of the MUI fatwas that had condemned Ahmadis, liberalism, secularism, and pluralism (see Hasyim 2014:58, 63, 76). Years later, in 2019, President Joko Widodo would startle his nationalist supporters by choosing Amin as his vice presidential running mate. In the aftermath of the Islamist mobilizations against Governor Ahok (2016–17), the president wanted to protect himself from Islamist attacks by choosing a running-mate capable of winning support in both NU and MUI circles (see the subsequent section).

Although well-respected and politely mannered, Yudhoyono was widely known as a national politician who, when he first became president, did not have a significant base of support in any organized segment of the Muslim community. In January 2005, an advisor to the new president told me that the president felt vulnerable to challenge on matters of Islam. The same man told me that it was for this reason that the president decided to break with protocol, go around the MORA, and elevate the MUI as the leading advisor to the government on Muslim matters. In a speech opening the MUI's seventh National Congress on July 26, 2005, Yudhoyono signaled just this intention when he declared, "We open our hearts and minds to receiving the thoughts, recommendations, and fatwas from the MUI and ulama. . . . We want to place MUI in a central role in matters regarding Islamic faith" (ICG 2008:8; see also Burhani 2013a:200; Bush 2015). It was under Yudhoyono's administration too that districts across Indonesia issued decrees severely limiting Ahmadiyah activities. The anti-Ahmadiyah campaign reached a climax in June 2008 with the formulation of the Joint Ministerial Decree (SKB) by the Ministries of Religion, Internal Affairs, and the Attorney General's office. The decree was written under the advisement of the MUI and LPPI. The decree severely restricted all public activities by Ahmadis and ordered the organization's preachers to cease all activities deemed contrary to Islamic orthodoxy (Burhani 2013a:201, 221; Crouch 2014:29).

Both the LPPI and the MUI lacked enforcement mechanisms for these rulings. However, even before the release of the Joint Ministerial Decree, the FPI had begun to claim that role for itself. In the attack in Parung, West Java in July 2005, the FPI provided the greater portion of the 8,000-person strike force (Burhani

2013a:240). Although after the incident the MUI issued a statement condemning violence against Ahmadis, it cited this and other incidents as proof that the government had to take firmer action *not* against vigilantes but against Ahmadis and other groups in the "interest [of] preventing disturbances in the community" (Olle 2009:101). Over the months that followed, there were dozens of smaller-scale attacks against Ahmadi schools, mosques, and homes (CSW 2014; Human Rights Watch 2013).

In the face of continuing government inaction, in May 2008 Muslim democrats and religious pluralists sought to mobilize a new nationalist coalition in support of religious freedom, called the National Alliance for the Freedom of Religion and Belief (AKKBB, *Aliansi Kebangsaan untuk Kebebasan Beragama dan Berkeyakinan*; see Musdah Mulia 2011). The alliance announced its intention to hold its first rally at the National Monument (Monas) in central Jakarta on June 1, 2008. The inter-faith alliance included non-Muslims but was led by prominent pro-pluralist Muslim intellectuals. The leadership included Ahmad Suaedy, an NU intellectual who had formerly directed the Wahid Institute, and M. Syafi'i Anwar, a much-admired journalist and the founding director of the International Center for Islam and Pluralism in Jakarta (and a dear colleague who had advised me on research matters for the better part of the 1990s).

Not by coincidence, FPI activists and other vigilantes had scheduled a demonstration at the same time at a site adjacent to the AKKBB event. On the scheduled day, the FPI contingent arrived at the locale armed with sticks and spears, clearly ready for trouble. And trouble there was. With loud cries denouncing Ahmadis as heretics, the hardline Islamists attacked the AKKBB demonstrators, seriously injuring fourteen (M. Crouch 2014:12–50; Suaedy 2010). When ambulances finally arrived at the scene, the FPI demonstrators attacked them too.[1]

In the days following what became known as "the National Monument [Monas] incident," many in Indonesia's news media and NGO community expressed confidence that the Yudhoyono government would at long last take action against those who perpetrated violence in the name of Islam. Ansor, the youth wing of the Nahdlatul Ulama, denounced the attack and hinted that if the government did not take action they would take measures against the FPI on their own. In the end, the government did take action. On June 4, 2008, 1,500 police officers surrounded the FPI headquarters in Tanah Abang, Central Jakarta, and arrested 57 FPI members, including Rizieq. Eleven of the militants involved in the pummeling of AKKBB marchers were eventually brought to trial, and Rizieq himself was tried and sentenced to eighteen months in prison. However, just one week after the "National Monument Tragedy" (*Tragedi Monas*), the two ministers and prosecutor general surprised many with the issuance of their joint decision drastically curtailing Ahmadi activities.

After weeks of cabinet discussion, President Yudhoyono himself is reported to have sided with advisors calling for the Joint Decision's restrictions on Ahmadi activities. On the basis of personal interviews with Yudhoyono assistants, the

Australian researcher, Greg Fealy, has reported that, in meetings with advisors in the months leading up to the Joint Decision declaration, the president had opposed a broad ban on the organization; an Indonesian president, he is reported to have said, must never give in to militants' pressures. A Muhammadiyah intellectual whom I had long known and who also served as an advisor to the president confirmed Fealy's report. My interlocutor also explained, however, that the president changed his mind as a result of continuing appeals from leading Muslim scholars on his Presidential Advisory Board (*Dewan Pertimbangan Presiden*), as well as Muslim leaders in mainline groupings like Muhammadiyah and NU (see Fealy 2016a:124–5; Hasyim 2014:58). The president's about-face was one more sign that, for growing numbers of people in state and society, the state's promotion of religion was no longer limited to favoring state-recognized religions. The role was now understood to include prosecutorial vigilance against those who deviate from state-sanctioned religious norms (see Chapter 3; Lindsey and Butt 2016).

Disagreements in government circles over how to respond to the FPI nonetheless continued. A Rizieq advisor whom I knew confided (off the record) that the militia leader was surprised and angered by the state's taking legal action against him. But Rizieq's imprisonment proved an only temporary impediment to his vigilante ambitions. That fact was vividly illustrated the morning of February 6, 2011, in Cikeusik, Banten Province, in the southwest corner of western Java. On that day a large contingent of vigilantes, the largest portion of whom were from the FPI, surrounded and attacked twenty-one Ahmadis meeting in a village home. As they set upon the hapless men, the crowd shouted, "You are infidels! You are heretics." The attackers filmed their assault and uploaded it to the internet. Local police at first attempted to protect the Ahmadis from their assailants but fled in the face of the attackers' overwhelming numbers. Three Ahmadi men were bludgeoned to death. Five others were injured. Despite their actions having been recorded on video, only three individuals were prosecuted for the killings; all were sentenced to less than a year in jail. According to the Setara Institute, a Jakarta-based human rights organization, this was but one of 114 acts of violence against Ahmadis in 2011, up from 50 in 2006 (Setara 2013; see also Human Rights Watch 2013). As Sana Jaffrey has observed (2020:326), in many of the worst incidents of vigilantism, "local officials . . . [were] not only present . . . but also play a critical role in ensuring victims' compliance with vigilante demands."

Rizieq's strategy of, on one hand, foregrounding matters of Muslim deviancy and supremacism and, on the other, striking deals with old-regime patrons entered a new and even more dangerous phase in the years between 2012 and 2017, as the FPI leader turned his attention to the Christian Chinese businessman-turned-politician, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok; see Chapter 2). As we have seen, Ahok was the target of fierce demonstrations by a loose alliance of anti-pluralist Muslims, the largest number under the direction of Habib Rizieq. After losing the gubernatorial election in April 2017, Ahok was convicted of blasphemy in a Jakarta court and sentenced to two years imprisonment. In the aftermath of Ahok's blasphemy

conviction, many foreign observers concluded that Indonesia's long-established tradition of multireligious citizenship had collapsed. But the anti-Ahok campaign prompted a slow but steady counter-mobilization by the nationalist-minded wing of the political establishment and from the increasingly anti-Islamist leadership of the Nahdlatul Ulama (see Chapters 2 and 7). In January 2017, Rizieq was accused of defaming the Pancasila state ideology. In the face of these and other charges, he fled to Saudi Arabia, returning in November 2020 only to be arrested and eventually imprisoned again.

The rise and (at least relative) fall of Rizieq and the FPI provide a dramatic illustration of one variety of exclusivist Islamism in democratic Indonesia. A non-Salafist Muslim committed to Muslim supremacism in matters of citizenship, Rizieq sought to leverage his support in Jakartan study circles into an aggressive campaign for leadership of the national *ummat*. The latter ambition had first become apparent with his transactional deals in support of President Suharto and President B.J. Habibie. But the ambitions became even clearer with his participation in the campaign to topple President Abdurrahman Wahid in 2000–1. This combination of anti-pluralist mobilization and deal-making with old regime elites remained a trademark of Rizieq's career. It reached a critical turning point with his support for Prabowo Subianto in the 2014 and 2019 presidential campaigns and his leadership of the national campaign against Governor Ahok.

Rizieq's career reflects another of democratic Indonesia's new political realities, one that has more to do with regime legacies than cultural citizenship as such. As several studies have observed (Hadiz 2016, 2018; Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018; Warburton and Aspinall 2019), most of the state and business elites that had risen to power in the final fifteen years of the New Order regime remained in place after the Indonesia's return to electoral democracy. These carry-over elites adapted skillfully to the more open environment of *Reformasi* Indonesia. Although now more responsive to deal-making with groupings in society, there were clear structural limits to the pacts officials were willing to make – not least because different factions in the elite lent their support to different populist actors and did so for tactical rather than ideological reasons.

In Rizieq's case, there was no clearer example of these limits than his relationship with the armed forces general and one-time presidential candidate, General Wiranto. By all accounts and based on my two interviews with him, Wiranto is a sincere if politically conservative Pancasila nationalist. However, as an elite politician with clear national ambitions, he was also obliged to strike the deals with the street-level activists and militias so central to Jakarta politics since 1998 (Aspinall 2005a; Buehler 2016). In the transition from the Suharto era to the Habibie presidency, Wiranto had figured among the political leadership offering support to Rizieq and the FPI. When, as minister of Defense in the Wahid cabinet, Wiranto fell out with the embattled president and was threatened with prosecution for human rights violations in East Timor, he again looked to Rizieq for support. Years later, however, when he positioned himself as a minister alongside President Joko Widodo,

Wiranto was among the members of the security establishment who pressed for the arrest and prosecution of Rizieq, both prior to and after the FPI leader's self-imposed exile in Saudi Arabia.

Whether at LIPIA or in Saudi Arabia or in his Ph.D. studies at the International Islamic University in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Rizieq was an activist who combined intellectual brilliance with unbridled personal ambition. Tempted by the transactional politics of *Reformasi* Indonesia, his own career ascendance became his public sphere priority. Seen from this perspective, Rizieq was not a "conservative" in any literal sense of the term. He sought to demolish many of Indonesia's most cherished legacies of Islamic sociability and multireligious nationalism. Notwithstanding his keen intelligence, he made no serious contributions to Muslim public reasoning. In fact, he did just the opposite, dedicating himself to a crude populist message of elite vilification, minority stigmatization, social media outrage, and a cult of personality (see also van Bruinessen 2021). In his last two years in public life, he urged his followers to refer to him as the "Great Religious Leader" (*Imam Besar*) as if his vigilantism had made him foremost among Indonesia's Muslim leaders.

Rizieq strategy was that of right-wing epistemological populism par excellence. He dismissed his rivals for religious leadership as traitors to Islam, warned of ever-present global conspiracies, and claimed that all that was needed to know Islam and advance Indonesia was to replace thoughtful religious scholarship with deference to his cult of personality. In these and other regards, he was closer in bearing to President Donald Trump of the United States (see Gorski 2017; Galston 2015) than he was a scholar and activist of Islamic tradition – including even Muslim leaders of populist persuasion like Recep Tayyep Erdogan of Turkey or Imran Khan of Pakistan (see Barton, Yilmaz, and Morieson 2021:3). And in a manner that shows striking parallels with far-right Christian nationalists in Western democracies, Rizieq succeeded in establishing himself as one of the greatest threats to democracy and citizen inclusivity that post-Suharto Indonesia had ever seen.

Salafism Subverted? Jafar Umar Thalib and the Laskar Jihad

Although its role was eventually overshadowed by the FPI, the second largest of the Islamist militias to emerge in the early *Reformasi* era, the Laskar Jihad, was the militia wing of the FKAWJ (est. 1999). At the height of the conflict in Ambon, Maluku, and Central Sulawesi from 2000–2, the Laskar Jihad had a more destabilizing impact on Indonesian politics than even the FPI. The militia was founded and led by one of the most charismatic exclusivist Islamists of the early *Reformasi* era, Jafar Umar Thalib (1961–2019).

Thalib first gained notoriety in the aftermath of his public defiance of President Abdurrahman Wahid's order not to send *jihad* fighters from Java to Maluku, to aid local Muslims battling Christians in the early months of the Maluku violence. Thalib had first appealed for armed *jihad* against Christian militias in Maluku in

January 2000. This was just weeks after tit-for-tat violence between Muslim and Christian militias in northern Halmahera in North Maluku had reached a horrifying climax with a Christian massacre of 500 Muslims in the town of Tobelo (Duncan 2014, 2016; Wilson 2008:114). Although this was just one in a series of mass killings in the territory, the scale of the massacre horrified the nation. The impact of the tragedy was also amplified by the fact that it was widely reported in newspapers in Jakarta, Java, and Sumatra, as well as in online news sites (Bräuchler 2003).

In the aftermath of the Tobelo killings, Thalib demanded that President Wahid defend the imperiled Muslim community by calling on all Muslims to join a defensive *jihad* in Maluku. I had made the acquaintance of Thalib in Yogyakarta a year earlier, and even in our first meetings he had made clear his disdain for President Wahid, whom he described as a "communist." When President Wahid responded to Thalib's demands by declaring that the Maluku conflict should be resolved through police action and negotiations, Thalib announced his intention to defy the president and send fighters to Maluku. Earlier, in late 1999, he had readied the religious grounds for this course of action by securing a nonbinding legal opinion (*fatwa*) from Salafy jurists (*muftis*) in Saudi Arabia and Yemen; both had authorized *jihad* in Maluku. In April 2000, a leading Salafy *mufti* in Medina, Muhammad ibn Hadi al-Madkhali, issued an even more authoritative *fatwa* declaring that President Wahid's prohibition of *jihad* in Maluku violated Islamic law (Hasan 2006:17).

Like Habib Rizieq of the FPI, Thalib's interventions in the public sphere were characterized not by open dialogue and reasoned exchange but by fierce propaganda broadsides and spectacularly staged shows of force. In April 2000, Laskar Jihad supporters marched outside the presidential palace, brandishing swords and appealing to all Muslim men to join the armed *jihad* in Maluku. Suggesting that a rift had opened between the president and security forces, the demonstration encountered no significant response from capital police, who – as I witnessed in person – stood by looking indifferent. Days later young recruits to Thalib's militia began training exercises on military-owned training grounds in West Java under the direction of uniformed army personnel. A few weeks later, the Laskar Jihad force traveled in open convoy from West Java to the port city of Surabaya in East Java. Despite the fact that the president, the minister of defense, and the governor of Maluku had all appealed to the police to prevent the militia from reaching Surabaya, the convoy was not stopped even once as it made its way across Java. The fractured nature of the governing elite in the *Reformasi* era was, here again, all too apparent.

After arriving in the East Java port, the fighters boarded state-owned ferries bound for Ambon; on arrival in that coastal town, they were greeted by local Muslim militias. Over the next few months, Thalib told me in August 2002, he dispatched some 7,000 volunteer fighters to Ambon and nearby conflict zones in the Maluku islands (see also Bertrand 2004:113–34; van Klinken 2007). Although a

few had prior military experience battling Russian forces in Afghanistan, the great majority of the fighters (and all of the twenty veterans I came to interview over the next four years) were young males from Java and Sumatra drawn to the campaign by Thalib's fervid appeals, as well as shock and anger at the Tobelo massacre (Azca 2011:261; Wahid 2013:58).

Notwithstanding their rapid ascent, both the Laskar Jihad and its parent organization, the FKAWJ, proved more short-lived than their FPI counterpart. The Laskar Jihad was officially established on January 30, 2000, and disbanded less than three years later in October 2002. The open and sometimes violent challenge Thalib presented to Abdurrahman Wahid (1940–2009, r. 1999–2001) caused a deep rift in Indonesia's tight-knit Salafist community. Although most Salafis viewed Wahid skeptically, the dominant current among the Salafi leadership differed from that of Thalib, counseling political quietism rather than public mobilization.

Growing opposition from his fellow Salafi preachers, including the Yogyakarta-based Abu Nida (see the subsequent section and Chaplin 2021:47–51), compelled Thalib to dissolve the Laskar Jihad militia on October 16, 2002, just days after the terrorist bombings in Bali (which was carried out by JI militants; see the subsequent section). The truck-bombing took the lives of more than 200 people, most of them Western tourists. Ragtag remnants of the Laskar Jihad militia have survived to this day, most notably in West Papua in the Indonesian portion of the island of New Guinea. There it has been reported that former members of the militia enjoy the backing of local armed forces commanders eager to use Laskar Jihad immigrants as a containment force against Papuan independence activists (al-Hamid 2013; Kivimaki and Thorning 2002). More noticeably in the Javanese context, decommissioned militia members established a small Salafi community in the Bantul region of south Yogyakarta, which the anthropologist Chris Chaplin has made the focus of a rich ethnographic study (Chaplin 2021:58).

At the national level, however, the Laskar Jihad today is effectively inoperative. As Najib Azca (2011) has shown in a highly original study, and as I myself discovered in interviews with former jihadists in Yogyakarta and Surakarta, the great majority of LJ fighters have long since returned to their homes and civilian life. Some remain committed to militant causes; however, many have withdrawn from state-level politics and retreated to living in any among the dozens of small Salafi communities established in recent years in East and Central Java. Some of the individuals whom I have met from these communities show symptoms of post-traumatic stress (see also Azca 2011). Jafar Umar Thalib himself, who had welcomed me every year to his home outside of Yogyakarta, passed away after a heart attack on August 25, 2019. During the last fifteen years of his life, the once-celebrated commander was ostracized in Salafi circles. In both its supernova ascent and black-hole burnout, Thalib's career offers insights into the distinctive appeals and structural limitations of the Salafist variety of exclusivist Islamism in contemporary Indonesia.

Varieties of Modern Salafism

Whether in Indonesia or the broader Muslim world, the term *salafi* (Ind.) or *salafiyyah* (Ar.) refers to several different currents of revivalist Islam. Although they differ in ideals and practice, all share an aspiration to purify the practice of Islam by bringing it into conformity with the example of the first three generations of Muslims, known as the "pious predecessors" or *al-salaf al-salih* (see Haykel 2014; Meijer 2014). The three generations include the companions (*sahaba*) of the Prophet Muhammad, their followers (*tabi'un*), and the next generation or the "followers of the followers" (*tabi-un al-tabi'in*).

Understood in this literal sense, one might reasonably conclude that today most Sunni Muslims can in spirit be regarded as *salafi*. After all, both the Qur'an (see Qur'an 2:6–7) and the traditions of the Prophet (*Sunna*) enjoin Muslims to abide by the example of the Prophet and the first generations of Muslims because God has provided through them a rightful path (*al-sirat al-mustaqim*) for humanity as a whole. A widely accepted hadith (Sunan al-Tirmidhi 2640) is often cited to reinforce this message. The hadith recounts that the Prophet had remarked that after his departure the community of believers would be divided into seventy-three sects, only one of whom would maintain the true Muslim way and thus ensure its followers' salvation. In Indonesia as in most of the world, mainline Sunnis have long assumed that they are the community of rightly guided Muslims to whom this hadith refers. This claimed identity is consistent with their self-identification as the "the people of the Prophetic tradition and the Community" (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*; see Alatas 2021). For centuries too, mainline Sunnis have also regarded the great scholars of Islam's middle period (tenth to fifteenth centuries) as important spiritual guides along this righteous pathway.

In the late nineteenth century, a new generation of reformists inspired by the writings of Jamal al-Din-Al-Afghani (1838–97; see Keddie 1968) and the great Egyptian scholar, Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905; see Sedgwick 2009) also began to invoke the name of the pious predecessors. Rather than calling for dutiful adherence to the legacy of classical scholarship, however, this new generation of reformers called for Muslims to purify Islam by putting aside medieval commentaries and returning to the Qur'an and Sunna (Zaman 2002:7). The reformists were convinced that, under the leadership of classical scholars, the Muslim community had deviated from the scriptural message as well as the pristine example of the pious predecessors. This modernist variety of Salafism also took exception to the methodologies for knowing and practicing Islam favored by traditionalist scholars, which they claimed erred in emphasizing "imitation" (*taqlid*) and deference toward scholarly precedent over independent scriptural reasoning (*ijtihad*). The modernist reformists regarded the tradition-minded hermeneutic as one of the causes of the Muslim world's failure to maintain its record of cultural excellence not just in religious scholarship but in mathematics and natural science. Rather than *taqlid*-based deference to classical scholarship, then, the reformists called for Muslims to return

to the practice of independent reasoning in both the study of scripture and the sciences of the world. The reformists also appealed for Muslims to purify Islam of *bid'a*, religiously objectionable "innovations," which is to say practices and beliefs not explicitly prescribed in the Qur'an and Sunna.

The memory of the pious predecessors is also invoked by a third Salafi current in modern Sunni Islam. In fact, in contemporary Indonesia as in most of the Muslim world, the community of Muslims with whom the term "*salafi*" (Ar., *salafiyyah*) is today most commonly associated is no longer the modernist heirs to the message of al-Afghani and Abduh but the variety of Salafism associated with the founder of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–92), along with contemporary scholars within the same tradition, such as Muhammad Nasir al-Din al-Albani (1914–99) and Abdul Aziz Abdullah Ibn Baz (1910–99).

Although Salafis in the al-Wahhab mold have their own traditions of Islamic jurisprudence (drawing especially but not exclusively on the Hanbali school of law; see Vogel 2000), their pathway toward knowing and practicing Islam prioritizes neither classical jurisprudence nor the *ijtihad*-guided reading of scripture favored by Muslim modernists. Wahhabi epistemology is instead grounded in creedal doctrines (*aqidah)*, foremost among which is the principle of the absolute oneness of God (*tawhid*). This *tawhidic* emphasis draws on Ibn Abd al-Wahhab's key works, the *Kitab al-Tawhid* and *al-Usul al-Thalatha*, as well as Ibn Taymiyya's *'Aqida al-Wasitiyya*. All three works are core textbooks studied in Salafi madrasas around the world, including the network of some eighty Salafi boarding schools (*pesantrens*) operative in Indonesia today (see Wahid 2013:2).

With this epistemological framework in hand, Salafi scholars in the al-Wahhab tradition feel that there is no need to waste time pouring over the scholarship of Islam's middle period, especially classical commentaries on jurisprudence, mysticism (*tasawwuf*), and philosophical theology (*kalam*). Salafi Wahhabi schooling does recommend the study of commentaries by the few classical scholars al-Wahhab regarded as exemplary. These include works by the founder of the Hanbali school of law, Ahmed ibn Hanbal (780–855), and the no less eminent scholar, Taqi ad-Din Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328; see Johansen 2008; Khan 2019:178–83).

Taymiyyah lived in an age of great peril in the Muslim Middle East with Western Crusaders threatening Jerusalem and Mongol horse warriors (many by then nominal converts to Islam) bearing down on the Levant and Egypt from the east (Crone 2003). In the face of these threats, Taymiyyah put forward an idea that was to become a central doctrine in modern varieties of Salafism as well as exclusivist variants of Islamism: that a state can be regarded as authentically Islamic only if it implements Islamic law. Conversely, where Muslim rulers decline to enact God's law, Taymiyyah argued, it is right and proper for Muslims to rebel against them. Taymiyyah also differed from many of his contemporaries in that "[h]is idea of the state is a Hobbesian Leviathan that rules with an iron fist" and shows little compassion in its enforcement of shariah law (Muqtedar Khan 2019:179–80). The Salafi concern with knowing Islam in a pure and uncompromising way, free of *bid'a*

innovations, philosophical embellishments, and Sufi notions of divine love, is also grounded on the conviction that any understanding of Islam's scriptural sources will remain in error unless grounded on the interpretive framework known as the *manhaj Salafiyyah* (lit. Salafi "pathway," "methodology"; see Wahid 2013).

Theorists of comparative politics or religious and social history who discount the role of knowledge in human history may be tempted to dismiss Salafi references to *manhaj* as little more than window dressing on "real" political-economic interests. However, as Ahmet Kuru (2019a) has underscored in his history of Muslim politics, ideas matter and matter in an especially consequential way when they link ways of organizing knowledge to organizations and material resources central to the production and reproduction of a polity and way of life. The *manhaj* discourse in Salafism does just that. The claim that all knowledge of Islam is in error if not based on the Salafi *manhaj* authorizes the formation of the strict hierarchy of religious notables so characteristic of Salafi sub-communities – even where, as is the case in today's Indonesia, the broader national community remains dispersively fragmented (Chaplin 2021:18). The hierarchy within subcommunity distinguishes Wahhabi Salafis from the more pluricentric pattern of knowledge and power long characteristic of classical Sunni Islam.

The Wahhabi-Salafi deference to recognized religious authorities extends not just to matters of religious learning but to dress styles, sociability, sexuality, and other aspects of daily life. Male Salafis are supposed to model their speech, dress, hygiene, and interactions on what they regard as the model of the Prophet. Young men are enjoined to shave their moustaches but grow a long beard, dress in a long white *jalabiya* (a collarless white robe with long, wide sleeves) over their shirt and trousers, and take care to make sure that their trousers do not extend below the ankle. There are also rules to respect whenever one eats, bathes, or engages in sexual intercourse. The religious norms that apply to girls and women are even more extensive than those for men (Inge 2016). Although pre-menstrual girls are allowed to cover their hair with a loose-flowing *hijab*, once they come of age they are supposed to wear an outer garment that covers the face and hides all contours of the female body. They are also expected to marry at a young age and embrace a marital relationship in which the husband is the unquestioned head of the family. A strict gender segregation is also maintained in all social interactions outside of the family. In short, in matters of greeting, sociability, hygiene, dress, and speech, Wahhabi Salafism prescribes a singular and totalizing way of life.

One other social tenet distinguishes Wahhabi Salafis from the great majority of Muslim believers, and it has especially serious implications for Salafi understandings of citizen belonging. According to Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, any Muslim who fails to carry out his or her religious duties or who otherwise violates Islam's creedal tenets is an unbeliever (Ind., *kafir*), even if she or he claims to be a Muslim. If the person who engages in such activities is given proper guidance and still refuses to change their ways, al-Wahhab insisted that they are guilty of apostasy and should be condemned as such – an excommunicative process known as *takfir*. Those

guilty of such offenses may be put to death. Although the quietist community who comprise the majority of Salafis in Indonesia today has distanced itself from this foundational prescription, radical exclusivists in groups like al-Qa'eda and ISIS/Daesh have moved it to the center of their ideological programs (Chaplin 2021).

Radical Salafis invoke a similar stipulation to justify rejection of the authority of political rulers who implement human-made rather than divine law. Drawing on the writings of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood activist, Sayyid Qutb (1906–66) and the founder of the South-Asian-based Jamaat-e-Islami, Abul A'la Maududi (1903–79), this current in modern Salafism emphasizes that God is the only sovereign and, as such, a proper Muslim state must operate on the basis of God's laws alone, a principle known as *hakimiyya* (Khan 2019:198; Wickham 2013:29). However, this anti-systemic tenet is rejected by other Salafis, including the great majority here in Indonesia (Chaplin 2021). The quietist majority insists that rebellion against a Muslim ruler is forbidden if the leader allows Muslims to carry out their religious duties.

Although Salafis in Indonesia and in other Muslim-majority lands show a wide range of opinion with regard to matters of state, then, most agree on the question of how to recognize their societal fellows. The principle is that of "alliance and dissociation" or *al-wala'wa al-bara'* (Wahid 2013:27–9). *Al-wala' al-bara* is, in a phrase, an ethical imperative that requires believers to exercise vigilance so as always to distinguish true Muslims from non-Muslims. In keeping with this injunction, Salafis are forbidden to greet non-Muslims, imitate their social habits, help them when they are in need, or attend their social festivities. For this reason, too, strict Salafis regard any concept of a religiously inclusive citizenship as antithetical to Islam.

Although all Salafis agree on the importance of the *al-wala'* principle for ordinary social interaction, they disagree as to how strictly it should be applied to people who identify as Muslim but whose manner of Islamic observance is non-Salafi. Salafis whom I came to know in a small neighborhood just to the south of the sultan's palace in Yogyakarta in the 2000s insisted that the principle applies not only to Christians, Buddhists, and the adherents of other faiths but to their Muslim neighbors who do not follow the *Salafi* pathway. Non-Salafi Muslims with whom I became acquainted in that same community confirmed that many faculty and students in a nearby Salafi boarding school did not greet their non-Salafi neighbors, most of whom were Javanese Muslims of Nahdlatul Ulama orientation. In his study of another Salafi community in the Yogyakarta region, Chaplin similarly observed that Salafi residents "create enclaves," which are seen as "a pious world juxtaposed against the morally vacant spaces outside its boundaries" and within which "members are proud to be different, using forms of address . . . that they do not use with those outside the movement" (Chaplin 2021:75).

In NU and Muhammadiyah communities, and in mainstream Muslim communities in Indonesia generally, neighbors place great emphasis on exchanging daily greetings and welcoming guests into one's home. Ordinary Muslims regard such

simple acts of quotidian recognition as indices of a proper Muslim sociality, one consistent with the traditions of refinement, civility, and beauty known as *adab* (see M. Ali 2019; Rozehnal 2019). In his study of Islam and subjectivity among the Minangkabau of West Sumatra, the anthropologist Gregory M. Simon captured this ethical sensibility vividly. He writes that among Minangkabau there is

> a powerful underlying assumption: . . . the ability to mix socially . . . provides an index of someone's essential moral soundness. . . . [P]eople evaluate others on the basis of their ability to take part in regular, moral interactions with others, and especially as equals.
>
> *(Simon 2014:65)*

Drawing on a related cultural premise, then, the fact that some Salafis in south Yogyakarta declined to address non-Salafi neighbors was for the latter not just a minor irritant. The behavior was seen by locals as proof that their Salafi neighbors lacked the qualities of religious refinement (*adab*) that are the true sign of a proper and patient Muslim moral character (cf. Khan 2019:56–65; Metcalf 1984; Ahmed 2016; Salvatore 2007).

From Campus to New Muslim Middle Class

Although Saudi-style Salafis had established a small presence in parts of Indonesia from the nineteenth century onward (Feener 2007:21; Hasan 2006; Kersten 2017:56–77; Ricklefs 2008:180), a new and more influential generation of Salafis emerged in the 1980s. The first of this new generation were graduates of the scholarship programs funded by the Muslim World League, known in its Arabic name as the Rabitat al-'Alam al-Islami (RAI). Although established in 1962, it was only in the late 1970s that the Saudi-based entity scaled up its missionary programs in Indonesia, working in collaboration with the DDII and the aforementioned Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies (LIPIA). The DDII engaged in a broad array of *dakwah* initiatives, including an ambitious program of mosque building. What was to become its primary instrument for the recruitment of a new generation of Salafi activists, however, was a program known as the Campus Preachers Training Program (*Latihan Mujahid Dakwah*, LMD).

The campus training program went through several phases, each characterized by a progressively greater measure of alignment with Salafist orthodoxy. The earliest phase showed a clear familiarity with *Salafi* teachings but held most of the latter's strict social stipulations at arms-length, favoring a style of proselytization closer in spirit to the reformism of the Indonesian modernist politician and thinker, Mohammad Natsir (1908–93; see Feener 2007:83–106; Madinier 2015). The earliest version of this campus training program was developed in the late 1970s at the Salman Mosque on the campus of the Bandung Technological Institute in West Java, under the leadership of Muhammad Imaduddin Abdulrahim (1931–2008).

Bang Imad, as he was known, was a lifelong admirer of Natsir. He was also a thoughtful and charismatic intellectual who would go on in 1990 to play a central role in the formation of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI; Hefner 2000:123). In those early years, authoritarian secularists in the Suharto regime regarded Imaduddin as a "fundamentalist," as one such officer told me in August 1993.

An electrical engineer by training who went on to earn a Master of Arts in management at Iowa State University (1963–5), Bang Imad favored an easy-going eclecticism over *manhaj-ist* rigor in his approach to understanding Islam. Moreover, he did so in a way that assumed that knowledge of God's law and guidance was a simple matter, one on which Muslims with a modicum of learning could easily agree. Bang Imad's friends who were associated with the more liberal-minded "renewalist" movement of the 1970s, including Nurcholish Madjid and Dawam Rahardjo (Hefner 2000:96; Kersten 2015:37–8, 44), told me on several occasions that they felt that Imaduddin had a rather "mechanical" understanding of Islamic learning. But they viewed him nonetheless as a brother and well-meaning friend.

Bang Imad's ICMI colleagues were also aware that he bore the psychological scars of having been incarcerated at the height of the New Order's crackdown on campus activism in 1978 when he had been imprisoned for fourteen months on charges of being "anti-Pancasila." For the fifteen years I had known him, Bang Imad was reluctant to speak about his imprisonment, and when he occasionally did he did so with awkward embarrassment rather than a martyr's pride. Upon his release from prison, he left in 1980 for the United States to pursue a Ph.D. in management studies, again at Iowa State, only to return to Indonesia in 1986. By that point, he told me in 1994, "things in Indonesia with regard to Islam were less stressful." He was not allowed, however, to resume his teaching position at the Bandung Technological Institute and would experience a full public rehabilitation only as a result of his role in the leadership of ICMI in the 1990s (Hefner 2000).

Under Imaduddhin's leadership, the LMD program at the Salman Mosque at the Bandung Institute of Technology became the model for new approach to the "caderization" (*kaderisasi*) of campus-based preachers. Though it relied on DDII and Saudi funding, the program in its early years showed Bang Imad's trademark eclecticism rather than Salafist exclusivism. As Bang Imad explained to me in August 2003, the program extended a welcoming hand to students not yet active in mosque worship and did so by combining seminars on general-interest topics like poverty, public health, and social inequality with mountain-climbing excursions and performances of traditional Indonesian arts. Its meetings were gender-mixed, albeit with men and women sitting in gender-segregated zones. For students who aspired to become cadres, the LMD program offered a comprehensive two-week training program. The training materials used in this program also displayed Bang Imad's trademark blend of doctrinal simplicity with social inclusivity. His program affirmed God's oneness and emphasized that no human ruler should be accorded divine authority. But the program also celebrated the principles of Indonesian

democracy and nationhood in a manner that showed a clear debt to training materials (*nilai-nilai dasar*) developed by Nurcholish Madjid when he served as chair of the Indonesian Islamic Students Association (HMI) in the early 1970s (see Kull 2005:49–51; Makin 2016).

The next phase in the development of LMD activism on Indonesian campuses was marked by a slow but steady shift away from Bang Imad's eclecticism toward a more theologically exclusive Salafism. The shift took place against the backdrop of an ongoing demographic shift. By the late 1980s, a new cohort of DDII graduates had returned from study in the Middle East. Unlike Imaduddin, the majority had studied in Egypt, but some 10–15% had graduated from programs in Saudi Arabia. It was from the ranks of these returning students that two new currents were introduced into the campus revival. Both took advantage of, but eventually put aside, Bang Imad's inclusive approach to reformist proselytization.

The first of these two currents was Muslim Brotherhood in orientation and came to be known as the *tarbiyah* movement (Bubalo and Fealy 2005; Machmudi 2006, 2021). *Tarbiyah* is an Arabic term commonly translated as "education." However, in Indonesia (unlike the Arabic original), the term carries the connotation of not just any kind of learning but Islamic ethical nurturing and character development. Under the Salman system, *tarbiyah* caderization was organized around a strict regimen of individual re-socialization undertaken in small study circles, referred to as *usroh* (Ar., "family"). The latter typically were made up of eight to sixteen same-sex individuals under the watchful supervision of a religious guide (*naqib*). The *usroh* model was modeled on the training programs popularized by Hasan al-Banna's Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood with their emphasis on the cultivation of "perfect character" (*muwassafat*) as the foundation on which any broader social transformation must be based (see Machmudi 2006:89; Wickham 2013:23, 42). As Nancy Smith-Hefner has also shown, some of the training that took place in the study circles had as much to do with gendered sociabilities as it did any broader societal vision. "Members refused to shake hands with individuals of the opposite sex," avoided eye contact and "inappropriate proximity" (*khalwat*) with the opposite sex, and also "condemned dating as utterly inconsistent with Islamic values" (Smith-Hefner 2019:38). However, once their cadres' subjectivities were sufficiently reoriented, these support groups were supposed to serve as the nucleus for communities (*jemaah*) of pious Muslims who would go on to bring about a gradual but far-reaching transformation of society.

The first *tarbiyah* cells sprouted on Indonesian campuses in the mid-1980s. They spread quickly in no small part because of the crackdown on left-leaning and nationalist-Muslim student groups that the New Order regime had initiated in 1978 under what state officials euphemistically referred to as the campus "normalization" (*normalisasi*) program. With their nonviolence and low political profile, *tarbiyah* groups managed to evade regime controls. On some college campuses, in fact, university administrators recruited *tarbiyah* activists to coordinate the

state-mandated religious courses students were required to take for two or three hours each week (Smith-Hefner 2019:38).

By the early 1990s, *tarbiyah* activists were sufficiently confident of their support in student circles to mount electoral campaigns for control of campus senates. These initiatives required the movement to challenge the nationalist-minded Muslim groupings once dominant in student senates. The most important among the latter included old-guard Salmanists, activists from the Association of Indonesian Muslim Students (*Himpunan Muslim Indonesia*, HMI; Hefner 2000:47–8, 67–8; Al Makin 2016), and members of the smaller and NU-linked Movement of Indonesian Muslim Students (*Pergerakan Mahasisa Islam Indonesia*, PPIM, est. 1960).

One of the reasons these latter organizations had difficulty mounting effective countermeasures against *tarbiyah* ascendance was that several years earlier most had been weakened by internal factionalism. In 1985–6, the HMI had splintered over the question of whether the organization should give in to New Order demands and accept the Pancasila rather than Islam as its sole ideological foundation (*asas tunggal*; Hefner 2000:121). Around the same time, the PPIM had undergone a less public but no less significant fissioning with a significant portion of its membership leaving the NU-based organization to make common cause with the democratic socialist wing of the Suharto-era student movement.

In contrast to these latter student associations, the *tarbiyah* movement held to a steady organizational tack. In March 1998, at the height of student protests against President Suharto, *tarbiyah* representatives from sixty colleges came together to form the Indonesian Muslim Student Action Committee, known by the acronym of KAMMI (*Komite Aksi Mahasiswa Muslim Indonesia*). Although a late-comer to the anti-Suharto campaign, KAMMI went on to play a central role in the final drive to oust Suharto. The sight of thousands of chanting Muslim youth, neatly dressed and demonstrating peacefully in the capital, with the young women walking separately amidst a sea of long-flowing scarves, captured the public's imagination and earned the students great public respect (Machmudi 2006; Madrid 1999; Rahmat and Najib 2001).

Three months after Suharto's resignation in May 1998, the KAMMI leadership came together with several like-minded groupings to establish a new party, which they named the Justice Party (*Partai Keadilan*). Like the student group from which most of its leadership had originated, the party's central aim was to promote Indonesia's peaceful Islamization. The PK leadership made clear that it sought to achieve this aim through democratic means, affirming that democracy is a system of governance compatible with Islam. However, the leaders left unresolved a number of thorny issues relating to the place of women, non-Muslims, and religious freedom in a democratic Indonesia.

In the years since its founding, the PK and its successor, the PKS, have been the only one among Indonesia's several Islamist parties to enjoy consistent electoral success (Aspinall 2005b:128–31, 148–54). In 1998–9, the party had less than a year to prepare for the first national legislative elections, and it won just

1.3% of the vote. In the aftermath of that first election, party officials chose to relax their cadre-training requirements for membership. Between 1999 and 2004, party ranks more than quadrupled, allowing the party (now rechristened the PKS) to establish new branches and go on to quadruple its share of the vote in the 2004 elections. During campaigning that year, the party downplayed the goal of implementing state-mandated *shariah*, instead emphasizing a platform of clean government and social service provision. In these and other ways, the PKS became the most successful and respected representative in Indonesia of a democratic Islamism.

In some two dozen interviews I conducted in Yogyakarta and Jakarta during the first decade of the new millennium, party officials took pains to point out that their soft-peddling of *shariah* was not just a strategic ploy. Rather, and in a manner consistent with Muslim Brotherhood–inspired movements in other parts of the world, the approach reflected the leaders' conviction that the implementation of Islamic law was a long-term goal that could only be realized when the Muslim public had a deeper understanding of and commitment to the law. In all these regards, the PKS leadership differentiated its approach from the top-down and immediatist tack favored by activists in movements like the HTI and the MMI (see the subsequent section).

Interviews that I conducted with PKS activists in Makassar, South Sulawesi, in 2008 and in Tasikmalaya, West Java, in 2014–15, however, confirmed that in these provincial locales a significant number of PKS activists agreed that democracy was consistent with Islam but disagreed with the slow-but-steady strategy favored by national leaders. These activists preferred to press for a quick and top-down implementation of state-codified shariah law. Unlike their counterparts in Jakarta and Yogyakarta, PKS activists in these two regions told me that they had reached out to representatives from the Malaysian Islamist Party known as the all-Malaysia Islamic Party or PAS (*Parti Islam se-Malaysia*; Basarudin 2016:123–5; Liow 2009). PAS officials had advised PKS activists that the best way to educate the Muslim public about the importance of state-implemented shariah was not by waiting for a gradual transformation of public culture but by pressing for shariah by-laws whenever and wherever possible.

Interestingly, however, recent research suggests that since 2010 even this more hard-line faction in the PKS has softened its views on shariah implementation. As Machmudi (2021) has reported, since 2015 the militant currents that I encountered in Makassar and West Java have been marginalized at the national level by a new generation of PKS leaders eager to combine religious activism with a more culturally accommodating piety. The new leadership has adopted relaxed policies on everything from the Pancasila to Sufi ritual observances (Machmudi 2021:172–3). Although some provincial branches remain fiercely opposed to these indigenizing initiatives, the PKS and its *tarbiyah* associates offer a qualified example of the moderating effects of democratic participation (see Buehler 2016; Tomsa 2011). The moderation is, however, not by any means an automatic effect of democratic

participation. As Buehler (ibid.) has suggested and my own interviews with PKS leaders in Yogyakarta and Makassar confirmed, the change has occurred only in the aftermath of fierce ideological debate and leadership struggles. And, as PKS activists in Yogyakarta told me, a major influence on that debate has been a shift away from understanding Islamic shariah as a fixed and finished body of positive "law" toward its reconceptualization as grounded in the higher aims of the law (*maqasid al-shariah*; see Chapter 7).

In short, by the early 2000s, the *tarbiyah* movement had effectively marginalized its Salmanist and Muslim nationalist predecessors in campus mosques across Indonesia. They had also moved beyond their campus base to build the only Islamist party to achieve consistent success in the *Reformasi* era, the PKS. Having consolidated their campus and party base, they went on in the 2000s to build a network of some 1,000 PKS-based "integrated" (*terpadu*) Islamic schools across Indonesia (see Chapter 5).

Although by the late 1990s *tarbiyah* Islamists of pro-democracy persuasion had become an ascendant voice on Indonesian campuses, they were not the only movement gathering momentum. A movement closer to the Salafi-Wahhabi original had also appeared on the campus scene. This was the Salafism with which Jafar Umar Thalib came to be identified. However, its transition from its early to later years was to prove considerably less settled than its well-mannered *tarbiyah* rivals.

The Salafi House Divided

In a detailed study of Islamic movements in West Java, the Indonesian ethnohistorian Chaider Bamualim (2015) has examined the development of Wahhabi varieties of Salafism in the Bandung area. His research revealed a pattern similar to that which I encountered in Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Makassar, and Tasikmalaya. In particular, he reports that after an initial period of quietism, both *tarbiyah* and Wahhabi-Salafi activists pressed to take control of the Islamic predication programs on university campuses; by the early 1990s they had made significant progress toward that goal. Both groups availed themselves of the already-existing Salman networks to expand their reach, only then to push aside their erstwhile allies.

Bamualim provides an especially insightful description of this process. "The Salman Mosque itself had by this time already become mixed with various other movements so that the presence of the Salafis was not at all obvious" (Bamualim 2015:179). Although most of the Salafis in Bamualim's West Java study were quietist and counseled obedience to Muslim rulers as long as those rulers allowed Muslims to carry out their religious duties, a few blended a Muslim Brotherhood variety of political activism with their Salafist piety. Ironically in light of his later political activities, Jafar Umar Thalib, the young Arab-Indonesian scholar and activist who defied President Abdurrahman Wahid and sent *jihadi* fighters to Ambon in 2000, originally identified with this quietist or ostensibly "apolitical" wing of Indonesian Salafism.

Born in December 1961, Jafar Umar Thalib explained to me in a long interview in August 2003 that he was the grandson of a distinguished Arab Muslim scholar from the Hadramaut region in Yemen who had migrated to Southeast Asia at the end of the nineteenth century. After staying short periods in several towns, Thalib's grandfather settled on the island of Madura and married a local woman, also of Arab descent. His son, Jafar Umar Thalib's father, was born in Madura but raised in Malang, East Java, and was active in al-Irsyad school networks. His grandson, Jafar Umar Thalib, was also born and raised in Malang. There, as Jafar told me, he (like me) developed a taste for the ginger-spiced coffee for which this pleasant, hill-country city is renowned.

Thalib did his early religious studies at his father's al-Irsyad school. When Thalib's father moved to Semarang to teach at Central Java's most prominent al-Irsyad boarding school, Thalib followed him and continued his studies there. In 1981, Thalib returned to East Java, now to attend the premier school in the al-Irsyad network, in the city of Bangil in the regency of Pasuruan. The Bangil school was famous for having been established by Ahmad Hassan, the founder of the theologically conservative but well-respected reformist organization, Persatuan Islam (PI, Islamic Association; see Federspiel 2001; Feener 2007:30–45).

In the Bangil school, Thalib soon acquired a reputation for excelling in his studies while being troublesome in matters of national politics. The latter was related to his habit of voicing loud criticisms of the New Order regime. In my first interviews with him in 1999, Jafar admitted with a self-critical smile that even at this renowned boarding school in Bangil he was too "young and rebellious" for his own good. Over the years in which I regularly met with him, Thalib's self-deprecating humor on these matters of personal character always surprised me, since his persona at public rallies could be fiercely polemical – punctuated by shrill denunciations of conspiracies by "enemies of Islam" against Muslims. In these and other regards, Thalib fit the mold of what the Turkish analyst, Ihsan Yilmaz, has described as a "civilizationalist" populist – in the sense that he used clash-of-civilization accounts of "Islam vs. the West" to frame his appeals (Yilmaz 2021; Barton, Yilmaz, and Morieson 2021). As noted earlier, Habib Rizieq of the FPI made similar civilizationalist appeals, but over time Rizieq placed less emphasis on international conspiracies against Islam than he did his own cult of personality. By contrast with Rizieq, Thalib's worldview was "civilizationalist" but notably less populist. From his earliest days as a student, he spoke out against Suharto-era policies, especially those requiring Muslim mass organizations to accept the Pancasila rather than Islam as their "sole foundation" (*asas tunggal*). However, as he aged and dreamed of achieving national prominence, he placed little, if any, emphasis on the Muslim populist themes of corrupt elites victimizing an innocent Muslim community (*ummat*; see Hadiz 2016). Thalib was reluctant to use these populist tropes because, as he told me on several occasions, he needed the backing of elite friends in high places.

In 1983 Thalib traveled to Jakarta to study at the Saudi-sponsored LIPIA. Even in this staunchly Salafi environment, Thalib told me, his rebelliousness got the better of him. Before completing his first year of study, he had a sharp exchange on Indonesian politics with one of his Saudi teachers. The incident was so heated that Thalib was asked to leave the school. However, the director of the institute, Thalib explained, "recognized that I was serious and sincere, even when I was so outspoken, so he arranged for me to get a scholarship for study at the Maududi Institute in Lahore, Pakistan."

In 1987, Thalib traveled to Lahore, determined to deepen his studies in the Islamic sciences. However, even in Pakistan, Thalib explained, his youthful impatience got the better of him, and once again he got into an argument with one of his teachers. The issue this time had to do with Thalib's insistence that school officials urge their students to participate in armed *jihad* against the Soviets in neighboring Afghanistan. Before he had finished even his first year of study at the institute, then, he was asked to leave the school. Thalib reluctantly agreed. However, rather than returning to Indonesia, Thalib resolved to seize the moment and throw himself into (as he phrased it) *al-jihad fi Sabilillah*, "striving [jihad] in the path of Allah." Without bothering to notify his family back in Indonesia, then, Thalib made his way northward by bus to Peshawar in northwest Pakistan, not far from the border with Afghanistan. Thalib had set his mind on finding a *mujahidin* unit with which he could fulfill his dream of conducting armed *jihad* against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. At this point, Thalib told me, he was not yet sufficiently well versed in his study of Islam to say with certainty that he was Salafi. But he was determined to join a unit which would allow him to further his religious studies while also battling the Soviet enemy.

In Peshawar in 1987, Thalib told me, he met briefly with a number of *mujahidin* commanders, among them a tall, handsomely long-faced Arab named Osama bin Laden. However, as Thalib explained in 2002, "I was convinced from early on that bin Laden was not a Salafi but a *Kharijite [al-Khawārij]*." The Kharijites were a radical sect in early Muslim history that had emerged in the aftermath of the murder of the third caliph, Uthman, in 656 C.E. Most Sunnis today remember Kharijites as "seceders" who separated from the primary Muslim community and who were quick to declare other Muslims apostates and unbelievers (*kafir*). In other words, Sunni Muslims regard the Kharijites as consummate extremists. Thalib eventually found his way to a *mujahidin* unit that opposed Bin Laden and had ties to a Salafi organization in Saudi Arabia known as the *Jam'at al-Da'wa ila al-Quran wa Ahl-i Hadith*. This organization is famous for, among other things, establishing the first Islamic emirate in Afghanistan during the anti-Soviet campaign, several years before the rise of the Afghan Taliban. Over the months that followed, Thalib (according to his own reports) participated in two pitched battles with Soviet forces, including one in which he claimed to have wielded an anti-aircraft gun against low-flying attack helicopters.

After two years of service in the Afghan campaign, Thalib returned to Indonesia in 1989 so as to assume a teaching post at his father's former Irsyad school in Salatiga, Central Java, a two-hour drive northeast of Yogyakarta. However, there too, he explained, he fell into his old ways and got into an argument with the school administration. Parents of several students in the school complained that Thalib was not providing instruction in true (quietist) Salafi doctrines but encouraging students to speak out against state policies on Islam. In this instance, too, the outcome was the same: the school director asked Thalib to leave the school. Thalib's response was again to set out in pursuit of religious knowledge in foreign lands.

Convinced that the time had come for him to deepen his knowledge of Salafi scholarship, in 1990 Thalib traveled to Yemen to study under the supervision of a man widely regarded as twentieth-century Yemen's most influential Salafy scholar, Muqbil ibn Hadi al-Wad'i (1933–2001). Although critical of the Saudi authorities on some matters, al-Wad'i was known as a quietist on matters of state politics and a fierce critic of both the Muslim Brotherhood and Osama bin Laden. In interviews with me, Thalib reported that no sooner had he arrived in Yemen than he fell gravely ill. His condition became so severe that he was unable to pursue his studies with al-Wadi'i as he had hoped. He nonetheless found time to develop an informal relationship with the scholar, who continued to advise him both in Yemen and after Thalib's return to Indonesia. However, plagued by ill-health, Thalib carried out most of his study of al-Wadi'i's curriculum on his own. To this day, Thalib's critics in the Salafi community cite this fact as the reason Thalib failed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the Salafi way.

In 1993, Thalib returned to Indonesia. The following year he joined forces with another well-known and better-credentialed Salafi scholar, Chomsaha Sofwan Abu Nida (b. 1954; see Chaplin 2021:47–51; Hasan 2006:254). Together the two middle-aged teachers established a small Islamic boarding school called *Ihya as-Sunna* in the village of Degolan in Sleman subdistrict in the special region of Yogyakarta in south-central Java. The school was located just 12 miles east of central Yogyakarta and less than a mile north of the Medical and Technical Science campus of the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII), the oldest private Islamic university in the country. The choice of locale was no accident. Unlike Habib Rizieq, with his outreach to street-toughs and lumpen-proletarians, Thalib and Abu Nida's appeals targeted university students and graduates. Asked about their background, Thalib told me that the great majority of his followers came not from Indonesia's State Islamic Universities and Colleges but from its "secular" state universities, such as, in this instance, Gadjah Mada University. Most students were recruited from among the technical and science students active in the study circles (*halaqah*) popular on local campuses (cf. Chaplin 2021:43). Students from the technical fields, Thalib told me, are better able to appreciate the "precision" of Salafist doctrine than are those educated in the social sciences and humanities or, worse yet (in Thalib's view), those who graduate from Indonesia's state Islamic universities. The faith of

the latter youth, Thalib told me, tended to have been "ruined" by too much reading of classical philosophical theology (*kalam*). Over the next few years, Thalib and Abu Nida would become the two most celebrated representatives of Salafism in Java. That fact was to make their eventual enmity all the more surprising.

Abu Nida is a more accomplished Salafi scholar than Jafar Umar Thalib ever was. Like Thalib and so many others in the Salafist community, his pathway to Salafism benefited from support given by the Saudi-supported Indonesian Council of Islamic Predication (DDII). Born into a Muhammadiyah family in Lamongan, East Java, in the 1970s Abu Nida had become active in the DDII's Campus Preacher Training Network. In the early 1980s, Abu Nida received a DDII scholarship to study at the Jami'a Imam ibn Sa'ud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. There, in addition to his core courses in the Islamic sciences, he threw himself into the study of Salafi theology. Upon his return to Indonesia, his DDII sponsors dispatched him to teach for two years (1984–6) at a boarding school known as al-Mukmin outside of Solo, Central Java. The latter school had been established in 1972 by Abu Bakar Ba'aysir and Abdullah Sungkar, long-standing DDII activists who went on to lead *Reformasi* Indonesia's most notorious terror network, the JI (see the subsequent section and Chapter 5; Fealy 2005; ICG 2002a, 2002b).

However, like many of the staff at al-Mukmin, Abu Nida appears to have had little knowledge of Ba'asyir and Sungkar's radical ambitions and even less appetite for political affairs in general. He was and is still today a quietist or (in Wiktorowicz's terminology) "purist" Salafi who counsels obedience to Muslim rulers, prohibits student membership in political parties, and dismisses political Salafists as "seceders" or "dividers" (*hizbiyya*). No less significant, his Gulf sponsors respected Abu Nida for his fluency in Arabic, his record of consistent academic achievement, and his aversion for formal politics. The reward for these achievements was that Abu Nida was given large institutional grants from two of the most important Middle Eastern funders of Salafism in Indonesia, the Kuwait-based Jam'iyyat Ihya al-Turath and the Mu'assasat al-Haramayn al-Khayriyyah from Saudi Arabia (Meijer 2014).

When Abu Nida and Jafar Umar Thalib established the Ihya as-Sunnah pesantren outside Yogyakarta, Thalib told me, the original understanding was that both men would teach at the boarding school. Once additional funds became available, they agreed, both would also work to establish a second and larger educational center for students of all ages from kindergarten to college. But from the start the two strong-willed men fell into quarreling. The initial source of the tension was not politics but finances: Abu Nida's record as a scholar and an institution-builder ensured that grants from Kuwaiti and Saudi donors were channeled to him, not Thalib. Meanwhile, although the charismatic Jafar Umar Thalib won an ardent following among the student activists who regularly visited Ihya as-Sunnah, Middle Eastern funders who met with Thalib in Yogyakarta are said to have been shocked by his poor managerial skills. They were also reported to have heard rumors that, while Abu Nida steered clear of domestic politics, Jafar Umar Thalib met regularly

with militants opposed not just to the Suharto regime but to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Just a year after the founding of Ihya as-Sunnah, then, Abu Nida left the boarding school and established a separate educational complex, the al-Turath al-Islami, 12 kilometers to the southeast of central Yogyakarta in Wirokerten, Bantul subdistrict. Although on several occasions I was told by Abu Nida followers that initially the senior scholar had planned to continue teaching at the Degolan school, Ihya as-Sunnah quickly became the base for Thalib's operations, while the al-Turath al-Islami became Abu Nida's. No less striking was that from this early period Thalib's school acquired a reputation for being a gathering place for militant Salafi activists, while Abu Nida dedicated his energies to high-quality programs in Qur'anic and Arabic study.

In 2000, Abu Nida's madrasa received an additional series of grants, facilitating the school's expansion into the sprawling campus it is today, and known by the English-language title, "Bin Baz Islamic Center." The school complex hosts more than 2,000 students (see Chaplin 2021:48). By contrast, Thalib's Ihya as-Sunnah never experienced enrollment take-off. At its peak in 1999, when I visited Thalib for a second time, Ihya as-Sunnah had only eighty students. Of those only half were in residence. When I last visited Thalib in July 2018, a year before his death, the number of *santri* had dwindled to eight, and most were the offspring of militants who years earlier had fought alongside Thalib in Maluku and were struggling to adjust to post-conflict life back in Java.

Notwithstanding claims that he opposed *haraki* varieties of Salafi political activism, then, Thalib's appetite for rough-and-tumble politics and his need to raise funds drew him into the political deal-making to which Abu Nida always objected. According to Salafi activists whom I interviewed, the land on which Thalib founded his religious school was donated by the nephew of a prominent army retiree and Suharto stalwart, who had settled in the Yogyakarta region in the late 1980s. Although Thalib always told me that he had purchased the land using his own funds, he made no secret of the fact that one of his aims in establishing the school was to combat "secular, liberal, and communist" influences in the Yogyakarta region. In this regard, he added, his goals were, as he put it, "consistent with those of our armed forces friends." Among those he now identified as "communist" was the former executive director of the Nahdlatul Ulama and then-president of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid. Not coincidentally, Wahid in August 2000 was in the midst of a bitter dispute with some in the armed forces command (Mietzner 2009).

After the fall of Suharto and Indonesia's return to electoral democracy, Thalib kept to his political pathway, further straining his relationship with Abu Nida. Abu Nida regarded democracy and political campaigning of any sort as un-Islamic and counseled his followers to steer clear of activism and remain loyal to the Indonesian state. As Noorhaidi Hasan has also reported (Hasan 2006:255), Thalib's resentment of Abu Nida's monopolization of contributions from Gulf and Saudi foundations

led him in 1998 to accuse his rival of being a follower of Muhammad ibn Surur al-Nayef Zayn al-Abidin. Al-Abidin is a Syrian-born scholar affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood who, while living in Saudi Arabia, had become a vocal critic of the kingdom after it invited in U.S. forces to guard against invasion by Saddam Hussein. To accuse Abu Nida of being "*Sururi*" and "*haraki*," then, was to accuse him of being disloyal to the apolitical Salafism favored by Abu Nida's Saudi and Kuwaiti funders.

This then was the political-economic context within which Thalib finally turned away from the quietist Salafism with which Abu Nida was associated and threw himself into a high-stakes political gamble. At its heart lay his challenge to President Abdurrahman Wahid, as seen in Thalib's dispatching of fighters to Maluku and Central Sulawesi. In addition to getting boots on the ground, Thalib and the Laskar Jihad leadership invested heavily in new communications technologies in an effort to influence the Muslim public sphere. They used the recently established internet to send daily reports on the Maluku violence to each of some 24 Laskar Jihad branch offices around the country. Each bureau downloaded the messages, which were already laid out in a desktop publishing format. These were then printed out on a single, two-sided sheet of paper to create a bulletin with the masthead, "Maluku Today" (*Maluku Hari Ini*). Information on the Laskar Jihad website, email address, bank account (for donations), and local branch offices were featured at the bottom of the bulletin's back page. At the height of their operation, Laskar Jihad officials in branch offices gave young male volunteers thousands of copies of the bulletin to distribute to the public. Clad in the Salafi militants' trademark turban, tunic, and above-the-ankle trousers, the volunteers positioned themselves at stoplights in cities across Indonesia. They distributed the bulletin for free but with the understanding that donations to the *Maluku* campaign were welcome. The more senior among the volunteers sold copies of the monthly magazine *Salafy*, as well as a large, sixteen-page weekly known simply as *Buletin Laskar Jihad Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah*.

Coincident with the *jihad* campaign in Maluku, the Laskar Jihad established a website at *laskarjihad.org* featuring photo galleries of alleged Christian atrocities, daily updates on the fighting, and Indonesian- and English-language commentaries on the religious significance of *jihad*. During its first eighteen months of operation, *laskarjihad.org* also featured stories and links to the websites of other armed *jihadi* groups around the world, including those in Chechnya, Kashmir, and Afghanistan. Tellingly, however, after September 11, 2001, these international links were removed from the site. Another change in the content of the Laskar Jihad website occurred after the organization's first national congress in Jakarta on May 13–19, 2002. Up to this time, the site had featured articles claiming the Maluku conflict had been instigated by Jews, Christians, and the United States. After May 2002, accusations of international conspiracy disappeared from the website. These changes appeared to confirm reports I was receiving from Muslim activists in Yogyakarta: that, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in New York City, non-Salafi elites funding

Laskar Jihad operations were pressuring Thalib to downplay his support for armed international jihadism.

Although it was the largest of the groups sending fighters to Maluku, Laskar Jihad was not alone in the effort. Other armed groups, including the FPI and the Indonesian Council of Jihad Fighters (MMI), dispatched fighters too. The Laskar Jihad contingent in Maluku, however, was ten times the size of its nearest competitor, the Council of Jihad Fighters – a fact that Council members readily acknowledged in interviews with me in Yogyakarta during July 2001. For most of 2000 and 2001, Thalib told me, the Laskar Jihad stationed 2,000 fighters in the field, rotating individuals out of the province every four-to-six months. While conducting battle operations, all but the senior command lived in the homes of local Muslims, an arrangement intended to facilitate Salafi proselytization. According to interviews I conducted in 2000 and 2001 and again in 2015–16 with Muslims in and around Ambon city, the support provided by the Laskar Jihad was at first warmly welcomed. Local Muslims recognized that the outsiders had helped to shift the balance of the conflict in the Muslim favor. However, many in the Malukan Muslim community were casual about daily prayer, fasting, and alcohol consumption. Laskar Jihad irritation with such lax behaviors led to widespread tensions and, on a few occasions, physical clashes with local men.

In March 2001, a Laskar Jihad officer in Maluku was accused of having sex outside marriage. The condemned man acknowledged his guilt and accepted the sentence Thalib pronounced against him: death by stoning (*rajam*). The death sentence was carried out calmly and with the consent of the male victim. A few weeks later, however, Thalib was arrested by the police on charges of incitement to violence and murder. Three weeks later, after right-leaning Muslim politicians rallied to his defense, Thalib was released from custody, although the charges against him were never dropped.

By March 2002, momentum for a peace accord in Maluku was growing. Several months earlier, in late July 2001, President Wahid had been removed from power, and his successor, Megawati Sukarnoputri, was known to have cordial ties with the senior military command. With Wahid out of the way, pressures for a peace deal in Maluku grew, and Christian and Muslim leaders signed an accord in April 2002. Showing that he was no puppet of military patrons, Thalib quickly went public with his opposition to the peace plan. In early May 2002, and at a rally I attended at Thalib's invitation, he called on his supporters to defy the government and continue the *jihad* against "Christian separatists."

In the months leading up to this declaration, Thalib had also worked to extend his armed campaign to new fronts. In August 2001, he informed me that he was about to dispatch 1,000 fighters to Poso, Central Sulawesi, an area where, like Maluku, a native Christian population had launched attacks on Muslim immigrants (Aragon 2000; McRae 2013). In December 2001, Thalib sent a smaller team of Laskar Jihad trainers to the province of West Papua, where some of the indigenous population, which is predominantly non-Muslim, had lent its support to a campaign

for independence from Indonesia. On February 14, 2002, Thalib traveled to Aceh, another province plagued by secessionist violence, where he formalized the opening of a branch of the FKAWJ. Muslim leaders in that troubled province accused Thalib of acting as a proxy for the Indonesian armed forces.

Whatever his precise ties to military elites, opposition to Thalib and the Laskar Jihad was growing in state circles. In mid-May 2002, Thalib was again arrested and charged with incitement to violence. Police officials explained that Thalib's arrest was sparked by a speech he gave on a Muslim-owned radio station in Maluku, in which he appealed to Muslims to reject the peace accord and continue the armed struggle against Christians. Thalib's arrest provoked a flurry of demonstrations by his supporters across the country. Leading Islamists, and some independent journalists, accused the Megawati government of arresting Thalib so as to create the impression that Indonesia supported the U.S.-led campaign against terrorism. A theological traditionalist and the leader of the country's largest Muslim party, Vice President Hamzah Haz defied President Megawati and visited Thalib in prison, declaring that he too felt the activist's arrest was politically motivated.

The court case against Thalib was still unresolved when, on October 12, 2002, two truck bombs exploded outside two popular tourist spots in Kuta, south Bali, killing 200 people, most of them young foreigners. Some in the Islamist press denounced the attack as a provocation engineered by American agents to create the impression that Indonesia had become a center for international terrorism. No more than a week later, however, the climate of opinion in the mainstream Muslim community had shifted. Like many of their non-Muslim counterparts, most Muslim Indonesians were bitterly opposed to the American administration's policies in Palestine and Afghanistan. However, the Muslim public was also shocked by the slaughter in Bali and by the idea that such actions might have been carried out by individuals claiming to act in the name of Islam. The public was also concerned that the calamity might push the country into even deeper political and economic crisis. Spurred by this shift in public sentiment, on October 19 the government announced stern measures against organizations and individuals suspected of ties to international terrorism.

Three days after the bombing and just before the government put these new regulations into effect, Laskar Jihad officials dissolved their paramilitary, shut down their offices, and closed their site on the World Wide Web. Thalib later told me that the measures had been planned since September and were in no way related to the Bali bombings. But others among his LJ lieutenants in Yogyakarta told me candidly that the signing of the Malino Agreement on February 13, 2002, had increased pressures for Thalib to withdraw his forces from Maluku. Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare and future vice president of Indonesia, Jusuf Kalla (b. 1942), had played a leading role in the negotiations, as did General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, then Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security. Displaying the confident defiance of superiors that had long been his trademark, Thalib responded to these initiatives by accusing the government of taking actions against him at the

instigation of U.S. officials. He finished his declaration with a thinly veiled threat to launch armed attacks against the government. On May 4, 2002, he was detained by police but subsequently released after intervention by national politicians.

However significant his backing in certain official circles, this series of brazen actions against the government only served to undercut support for Thalib in Indonesia's Salafi community. Although still modest in membership compared to mainstream organizations, the steady progress in the building of Salafi schools and study circles had drawn the Salafi movement squarely into Indonesian society, making its leadership more responsive than ever to pressures from local political and business elites (Chaplin 2018, 2021). Thalib's calls for rebellion against the government contradicted other Salafi leaders' ambitions of achieving greater national influence by working with rather than against state and security agencies. The fact too that, rather than keeping to his original mission, Thalib had sent Laskar Jihad representatives to Aceh and Papua, in what many observers regarded as a blatant effort to curry favor with security officials, further antagonized his relationship with fellow Salafis. In a conversation with me on July 24, 2002, Thalib explained that he felt compelled to suspend his Laskar Jihad campaign "for the purpose of national unity." When I suggested that motive seemed to represent a departure from the religious rationales with which he had justified previous *jihad* campaigns, his answer startled me with the clarity of its political rather than religious logic: "Our country's national integrity is being tested, and our [Laskar Jihad] task is to join with others to defend its unity."

During these same weeks, rumors swirled in Salafi circles in Yogyakarta and Surakarta that local and national government officials were pressuring senior Salafi teachers to rein in Thalib once and for all. Most senior teachers were already convinced of the error of Thalib's ways. As Noorhaidi Hasan has reported (2006:211), several had sent a letter to the senior Saudi scholar who, years earlier, had approved the fatwa on *jihad* in Maluku, sheikh Rabi Bin Hadi al-Madhkali. The letter writers then sought to bolster their appeal by dispatching two Indonesian representatives to Saudi Arabia to meet al-Madhkali. The appeal was successful, and al-Madhkali soon issued a statement in which he declared that Thalib had deviated from the terms of the original fatwa. In early October, the senior executive board of the Communication Forum (under whose charge the Laskar Jihad had originally been established) met in emergency session and formally disbanded the militia. Although Thalib publicly rejected the decision, the national leadership of the Laskar Jihad sided with the Communication Forum leadership. Several days later, on October 12, terrorists later identified as linked to the JI bombed a popular tourist nightspot in south Bali. On October 16, 2002, in the face of growing protests from his Salafi comrades, Thalib too announced the dissolution of the Laskar Jihad.

It was a full year before I was able to meet with Thalib again, in August 2003 at the Ihya as-Sunnah boarding school. The school struck me as more disheveled than ever, and Thalib was visibly dispirited. He told me that the experience of the previous two years had left him "deeply disappointed." When I asked just what

he meant, his candor again surprised me: he said he felt "betrayed" by his Salafi comrades. He explained that he felt that, through the Laskar Jihad, the small Salafi community had been given an opportunity to build a national following by collaborating with Muslim Indonesians from backgrounds more varied than the Salafi community alone. When I asked whether such outreach was not contrary to the Salafi pathway (*manhaj*), he surprised me again by saying, "Perhaps the *manhaj* has been misunderstood."

The author of an important Ph.D. thesis on Salafi *pesantren* in Indonesia, Din Wahid has observed that in the years following the Laskar Jihad's dissolution Thalib remained active on the national talk circuit but seemed to drift without a clear sense of purpose. He made television appearances with a neo-Sufi celebrity preacher, Arifin Ilham (1969–2019). Arifin's leadership of huge "zikir together" rallies (*dzikir bersama-sama*) – a Sufi utterance of God's name conducted in public settings – had proved popular in urban middle-class circles (cf. Heryanto 2011). But the ritual activity was roundly condemned by mainstream Salafis as illegitimate religious innovation (Wahid 2013:60–1).

In 2008, Thalib again signaled his hope of reconciling with the national Salafi leadership. He made *umrah* pilgrimage to Mecca, where he sought to meet with the senior Salafi sheikh, Rabi al-Madhkali. Although at first reluctant, the cleric finally agreed to meet but with preconditions. He demanded that Thalib make a public declaration of repentance, abide by the true Salafi *manhaj*, avoid all involvement in politics, and relinquish any claim to leadership in the Salafi community (Wahid 2013:62). Thalib agreed and issued the statement. After he returned to Indonesia, he issued a similar declaration, in which he begged for forgiveness for having criticized senior Salafis. In 2011, Salafi teachers and leaders in the Yogyakarta region responded to my questions as to their evaluation of Thalib's standing in the community by saying simply, "he's finished."

When, later that same year, I visited Thalib at Ihya al-Sunnah, the school had a handful of students, its grounds were in an even sorrier state of disrepair, and Thalib struck me as depressed. His career as a nationally prominent Salafist leader was in fact over, and he seemed painfully aware of that fact. Having earlier been tempted by Thalib's call for anti-systemic *jihad*, the mainstream Salafi community had decisively opted for greater integration into Indonesian society (cf. Chaplin 2018, 2021). This tack required Salafis to turn their back once and for all on the insurgent Salafist who had challenged the Indonesian state and sought to build a politically assertive rather than quietist variety of Salafism. Thalib had gambled on an alternative high-stakes strategy for wooing powerful patrons. But in the end his gamble had failed.

Exclusivist Islamism at the Limit: Jemaah Islamiyah and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia

Although in the early years of the post-Suharto era the FPI and the Laskar Jihad were the best-known Islamist militias, their notoriety in the national public sphere was

soon eclipsed by a more clandestine organization known as the JI. Although it had been established in January 1993 and became the target of state intelligence efforts in late 2001, the JI achieved international notoriety in October 2002, when young militants affiliated with the organization (but not necessarily acting at its leadership's instructions) carried out the most damaging terrorist attack of the entire *Reformasi* era: the truck-bombing of a resort club in south Bali, killing more than 200 people (ICG 2002a, 2003). Unlike the FPI and the Laskar Jihad, a significant portion of the JI membership regarded terror attacks on the "near enemy" – civilians and government officials in Muslim-majority countries that do not implement shariah law – as every bit as legitimate as "far enemies" like Israel, the United States, and other allegedly Muslim-oppressing states. If Habib Rizieq and Jafar Umar Thalib were willing at times to strike deals with elite patrons, then, the JI was so resolutely anti-systemic as to make such strategic transactionalism impossible.

This more uncompromising attitude reflected several influences. Among the most important were the writings and example of the Palestinian-born lieutenant and spiritual advisor to Osama bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam (1941–89). Unusual among violence-prone Islamist activists, Azzam was a gifted scholar who in 1973 had earned a Ph.D. in Islamic jurisprudence at al-Azhar University in Cairo (McGregor 2003:92–3). While studying in Egypt, he had developed close ties with the family of the late Islamist theorist and Muslim Brotherhood leader, Sayyid Qutb (1906–66). During these same years, Azzam familiarized himself with the works of a man who was the leading theorist of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad organization and the strategist for the 1981 assassination of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, Mohammed Abd al-Salam Faraj (1954–1982; see Gerges 2009:9–12). From Qutb, Azzam borrowed the "civilizationalist" (Yilmaz 2021) vision of an abode of Islam (*dar al-Islam*) locked in a fight to the finish with an abode of ignorance and warfare (*dar al-harb*). He identified the latter with Western governments and their Muslim allies. Also like Qutb, Azzam believed that the Manichean nature of the conflict mandated not defensive jihad but unceasing revolutionary struggle. From Faraj, Azzam borrowed three no-less-critical concepts: that jihad is a personal (*fard 'ayn*) and not just a collective duty (*fard kifaya*; see Gerges 2009:3); that jihad requires ceaseless effort to establish a state based on Islamic law; and that the urgency of the latter task requires Muslims to see rulers who implement non-Islamic law as apostates and a "near enemy" who should be overthrown. All of these doctrines came to figure centrally in the JI's ideological vision.

Azzam's influence on what was to become the JI movement was not merely ideological. Many of the militants who went on to assume senior leadership positions in the JI in the late 1990s were Afghan alumni who had received military training between 1985 and 1995 in camps along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Indonesian volunteers who visited these camps usually passed through a service office in Peshawar, the administration of which was under Azzam's direction (Barton 2005:39–45; ICG 2003:3). In 1985, the mujahidin campaign against the occupying Soviet forces had escalated to new heights, and the Saudis, with full

American backing, lavished funds on mujahidin fighters. These investments facilitated a marked uptick in Indonesia arrivals, including from the ranks of individuals who would go on to form the JI.

It was in these years, then, that Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, founders of the JI, took advantage of international developments to reach out to donors in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in an effort to secure funding for Indonesian recruits to undergo training in Afghanistan. Eventually some 600–900 Indonesians underwent *mujahidin* training in the years between 1985 and the Taliban rise to power in 1992–3. However, fewer than half of those militants later went on to affiliate with the JI (ICG 2003:2). Half of the Indonesian fighters had trained in camps linked to Osama bin Laden (Abuza 2007:37–65; Fealy 2005). From 1996 to 2000, the JI also sent fighters for training at military camps operated by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in the southern Philippines (Barton 2005:20; ICG 2003:i).

The two men responsible for the establishment of the JI, Abdullah Sungkar (1937–99) and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir (1938–), were Arab Indonesians who had begun their careers working under the auspices of the DDII. Ba'asyir was an alumnus (1959–63) of the respected modernist Gontor school in Ponorogo, East Java (Castles 1967). Sungkar had been educated in al-Irsyad schools but acquired his ideological training independently in Islamist study circles. In their youth, both men had been active in the Masyumi-linked Indonesian Muslim Youth Movement (*Gerakan Pemuda Islam Indonesia*). The two men became partners in Islamic predication in 1967, not long after Mohammad Natsir's establishment of the DDII. Late that same year, Sungkar was appointed the executive director of the DDII for Central Java. Shortly thereafter the two men established Radio Dakwah Islamiyah Surakarta, a local radio station dedicated to Islamic propagation. Citing its anti-state declarations, Indonesian security officials shut down the station in 1975. In the interim, in 1971, the two men established their Islamic boarding school, Pesantren al-Mukmin, which two years later moved to the town of Ngruki outside of Solo in Central Java (ICG 2002b:6–7). Networks linked to this institution were to be the foundation on which the JI network was built (see also Madinier 2015).

Although in the 1970s Sungkar and Ba'asyir had not yet acquired a reputation for violence, they had long made clear their admiration for the Darul Islam, the Islamist movement that had mounted a rebellion against the Republican government from 1949 to 1962 (Formichi 2012; van Dijk 1981). In 1946 the Dutch colonial administration ousted during the Japanese occupation (1942–5) returned to the Indies and, with British backing, launched a campaign to reimpose colonial rule. After three years of armed struggle, an exhausted nationalist leadership signed the Renville agreement in 1948 ceding control of most of West Java to the Dutch so as to allow an orderly retreat of Indonesian fighters to republican-controlled territories to the east. Taking exception to the terms of the agreement, a Muslim commander in West Java, Sekarmadji Mardidjan Kartosuwirjo (1905–62), launched a preemptive insurgency to continue the battle against Dutch forces. That movement later came to be known as the *Darul Islam* (DI; "abode of Islam";

Formichi 2012:96–103; Kahin 2012:56). When, in December 1948 and early 1949, small Republican units attempted to infiltrate into the West Javanese hinterland to mount attacks on Dutch forces, Kartosuwirjo's forces objected and attacked the Republicans. On August 7, 1949, Karosuwirjo proclaimed the establishment of the Islamic State of Indonesia (*Negara Islam Indonesia*, NII) and thereafter refused to recognize the sovereignty of the Republic.

The DI administration, Kartosuwirjo declared, did not recognize secular law but only divine law (*shariah*). Untrained in the Islamic sciences, the Islamist leader never articulated a comprehensive model of what he meant by shariah and the methodologies through which it was to be understood. Nonetheless, now locked in conflict with the republican forces he had once supported, his stance toward the country's national leadership hardened. On November 30, 1957, DI agents shocked the nation by mounting an unsuccessful assassination attack against President Sukarno in central Jakarta. Sukarno and the military responded with a well-coordinated crackdown in the areas of West Java under DI control. DI activists countered with harsher measures of their own against civilians in their territories. Claiming to implement Islamic law, DI forces cut off thieves' hands, stoned adulterers, and executed Muslim villagers who had paid taxes to the republican government. As much as a result of regional resentments against the central government, the DI rebellion attracted support in Aceh, South Sulawesi, South Kalimantan, and West and Central Java. Armed resistance in West Java continued for more than a decade, ending only in 1962 with the Indonesian military's capture, trial, and execution of Kartosuwirjo. The conflict in South Sulawesi came to an end three years later.

Although their above-ground units had been defeated, DI networks continued to operate clandestinely even after their leader's death. In a pattern later seen with other New Order opponents, some regional DI leaders were invited to collaborate with the Indonesian armed forces. In West Java during 1965–6, for example, DI veterans were recruited to assist in the roundup and killing of communists. In the early 1970s, as anti-communist forces in Vietnam teetered toward collapse, Suharto's intelligence chief, Ali Moertopo, engineered an anticipatory maneuver, readying DI forces for action should Vietnam's fall lead to a renewed communist threat in Indonesia (Feillard 1995:119; ICG 2002a, 2002b:5; Madinier 2015). During the 1970s and early 1980s, there were allegations that several bombings blamed by the government on a shadowy Islamist group, which the government called *Komando Jihad*, may really have been the work of Ali Moertopo double agents working with the DI.

Whatever the precise nature of these DI-New Order collaborations, it is clear that a rejectionist DI underground had survived the movement's suppression, and by the 1970s some cells had resolved to relaunch the campaign for the implementation of their harsh variety of shariah law (ICG 2005:3–5). In 1976, one splinter group decided the time was right for a new round of armed struggle; a short time later, militants launched attacks on Christian and government targets. The violence spiraled on until 1981, when the group's leader, Asep Warman, was tracked down

and killed (ibid.:3–5). Even after Warman's execution, an underground faction remained active, recruiting followers, now not from rural strongholds but from the anti-system fringe of Indonesia's Muslim student movement.

As has been widely reported, Ba'asyir and Sungkar shared an admiration for Kartosuwirjo and his campaign to establish an Islamic state (ICG 2002b:3). In a three-hour interview with me in December 2002, however, Ba'asyir made a point of emphasizing that he felt that Kartosuwirjo's understanding of Islamic law was flawed and that this was one of the reasons his campaign to establish an Islamic state had come to naught. Ba'asyir also commented that Kartosuwirjo was a practitioner of Sufi mysticism, activities the Salafi-oriented Ba'asyir regarded as heretical (see Solahudin 2013:3).

Notwithstanding doctrinal differences of this sort, in the early 1970s Ba'asyir and Sungkar met regularly with several prominent leaders in the DI. Among the contacts was Haji Ismail Pranoto, a former associate of Kartosuwirjo accused by New Order officials of leading *Komando Jihad* and promoting violent opposition to the New Order state. Sungkar and Ba'asyir were arrested and charged with subversion on November 10, 1978. The two men were detained for four years until their trial, when they were sentenced to nine years in prison. In late 1982, their sentences were reduced on appeal and the men were released for time served. Tipped off that they might soon be rearrested, Ba'asyir and Sungkar fled to Malaysia in 1985. There they established an Islamic boarding school that served as a critical node for Islamist activists in Indonesia and Malaysia (ICG 2002a:9). In 1992, continuing tensions with DI leaders in West Java led Ba'asyir and Sungkar to sever ties with the DI and, in January 1993, establish their own underground organization. Over time their movement came to be known as the JI.

Far more than was ever the case with Kartosuwirjo and Darul Islam, then, Ba'asyir and Sungkar were drawn into transnational Islamist activism from early on. The participation of dozens of high-ranking JI officers in the Afghanistan and Philippines training camps reinforced the JI network's transnationalism, as well as its commitment to a "civilizationalist" (Yilmaz 2021) model of the global Muslim community in a fight-to-the-finish with the West. Most of the senior JI leadership had ties to or otherwise supported al-Qa'eda. This was the case with Ba'asyir too. In my 2002 interview (a little more than one year after the 9/11 attacks) he told me that he considered himself a supporter of Usama bin Laden and regarded the latter's 9/11 violence in New York as religiously justified. In short, by the mid-1990s, a significant portion of the JI leadership, including Sungkar and Ba'asyir, had become anti-system radicals. They conceived their jihadist mission in transnational and civilizationalist, not just Indonesian, terms.

The military training JI volunteers underwent in Afghanistan and the Philippines was soon put to strategic use back in Indonesia, as the country made its way into the turbulent early years of the post-Suharto transition. Responding to the Christian-Muslim violence raging in eastern Indonesia, on Christmas Eve 2000, JI militants bombed forty churches in towns across the Indonesian archipelago, killing nineteen

and wounding a hundred. In October 2002, in an action designed to mark the prior year's attacks in the United States, JI bombers struck at two beach-front clubs in southern Bali, killing more than 200 people, most of them Western tourists (ICG 2002b). In August 2003, the JI carried out a suicide car bombing of the Marriott Hotel in central Jakarta; ten people died. In September 2004, JI militants carried out a suicide attack on the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, killing nine people (ICG 2005). In 2005, the JI carried out a second bombing in Bali, once again using suicide bombers.

As I learned from interviews with former JI activists in Yogyakarta in the mid-2000s, the growing involvement of JI cells in terrorist violence caused dissension in the organization's ranks. In the face of increasingly effective anti-terrorism measures by state authorities, in 2005 the JI split into two factions, the one pulling back from terrorist attacks and the other calling for stepped-up armed struggle. Ba'asyir was said to be among those who felt the armed attacks were premature and counter-productive. The violence-prone faction was led by the Malaysian-born JI strategist, Noordin Mohammad Top. After a four-year lapse, on July 17, 2009, Top's commandos carried out a spectacular attack on the Marriott and Ritz-Carlton Hotels in Jakarta (ICG 2010). In the aftermath of these attacks, the Indonesian police intensified their anti-terror crackdown. Over the next three years, they arrested more than 200 militants and broke up several bomb-making cells. In September 2009, the Indonesian police succeeded in cornering and killing the splinter-group's master strategist, Noordin Top.

Although these actions show that the JI had developed an ambitious terrorist wing, Ba'asyir continued to vacillate between violently anti-systemic and broader-based mobilizational strategies. Sungkar and Ba'asyir returned to Indonesia from Malaysia in late 1999. Sungkar died of natural causes a month later in November. In my interview with him in late 2002, Ba'asyir denied that he had ever supported terrorist attacks like those seen in Bali. But he readily admitted that several of his youthful followers were "naughty" (*nakal*) and had perpetrated the attacks. Ba'asyir also conceded, however, that after Suharto's departure in May 1998, the two men had concluded that it was time to return to their "original plan." When I asked what he meant, he explained that their original plan had been to organize small communities (*jemaah*) of pious Muslims committed to the goal of implementing Islamic law in local settings and then to unite these believers under an umbrella organization dedicated to the goal of replacing secular Indonesian law with shariah law. He explained that it was this plan that had motivated the establishment of the MMI at a national congress attended by 1,500 delegates in Yogyakarta in August 2000, an event I attended.

Accommodationists Versus Anti-system Radicals

Although, as was also his style, Ba'asyir claimed sole responsibility for having designed the blueprint for the MMI, my interviews over the next fifteen years

with the council's Yogyakarta-based executive confirmed that the organizational planning that had led to the MMI's creation was actually the fruit of collaboration between two brothers, Irfan Suryardy Awwas (b. 1963) and his older brother, Fikiruddin, known more generally today by his adopted name, Abu Jibril (1956–2021). The family tie offered a striking example of the networks and tensions that lay at the heart of the Majelis Mujahidin leadership.

Irfan, as I came to know him, was a former student activist born in eastern Lombok but living in Yogyakarta since first attending university in 1980. In 1981 Irfan established a pro-shariah newsletter, known as *ar-Risalah* (the Bulletin), which he distributed at mosques and in study circles on the campus of Gadjah Mada University. In 1982, Irfan was elected executive director of the Yogyakarta branch of the Coordinating Body of Mosque Youth (*Badan Koordinasi Pemuda Masjid*, BKPM). Years later in our conversations, Irfan explained to me that it was as a result of his becoming chair of the BKPM that he became involved in anti-Suharto politics. Late in the same year he published transcripts from the court trial of Ba'asyir and Sungkar, along with critical comments on the New Order regime (written by both Islamist and human rights activists). These bold actions catapulted Irfan into national prominence. But they also exposed him to heightened state scrutiny.

Irfan was arrested the following year, subjected to torture, and sentenced in February 1986 to thirteen years in prison. He was eventually released for time served in 1995. Among other things, prosecutors had alleged that Irfan advocated the establishment of an Islamic state and been active in Komando Jihad since 1979 – a charge that, in a conversation with me, he denied, pointing out that he was only sixteen years old at that time (ICG 2002a:10). The real reason for his prosecution, Irfan explained, was that he opposed Suharto and had participated in study groups and publishing activities advocating a comprehensive implementation of Islamic law.

One of the first actions that Irfan undertook after his release from prison was to establish a publishing house in Yogyakarta, known as Wihdah Press. In the two years prior to Suharto's fall in May 1998, Irfan published a series of Salafiyah-oriented books, many of them translations from Arabic and underscoring the importance of implementing Islamic law. These early publications avoided making any direct challenge to the Suharto regime. Another consistent theme of Wihdah Press's publications centered on Salafiyah criticisms of feminism and gender equality, themes that have remained a focus of MMI publications to this day. As Inayah Rohmaniyah (2014:142) has noted, Irfan's writings in the late 1990s made a point of attacking career women as "defiant, alienated from Islamic values" and probably suffering from "psychological disorders" that lead women to abandon their "natural" roles as mothers and wives.

Interestingly, however, the man I came to know over a seventeen-year period had a remarkably warm relationship with his well-educated and professionally accomplished wife, Dra. Sulastiningseh, M.Sci. He credited her with having gotten him

through the dark years of his imprisonment. And whereas Jafar Umar Thalib's wives wore face-covering burqa and served guests through a small window behind a wooden partition, Sulastiningseh was an outgoing professional who wore a modest but stylish hijab. She had supported her family during its lean years by earning a master of science degree in economics at Gadjah Mada University (one of Indonesia's two finest universities) and securing a professorial appointment at the Widya Wiwaha College of Business Administration in Yogyakarta. In 2008, she had published a best-selling popular book on *How to Intelligently Manage Family Finances*, the preface to which expressed thanks to her American friend, Nancy Smith-Hefner. In these and other examples, my sense is that, in marked contrast to Ba'asyir, over the course of the 2000s, the gender views of Irfan and the younger leadership of the MMI underwent a subtle but significant evolution away from Ba'asyir's neoconservative Salafism. Irfan was a man of shariah-minded piety but also open to the changing nature of Indonesian society, including on matters of gender.

With the transition to the *Reformasi* era and the establishment of the MMI, Wihdah Press publications took a more activist turn. During the first three years of the post-Suharto period, for example, Wihdah press published some of Indonesia's most sensational tracts on the communal violence raging in eastern Indonesia, including Rustam Kastor's widely read book on the conspiracy of Christians to destroy the Muslim community in Ambon (Kastor 2000). This work and two sequels make the "civilizationalist" case that the violence in Maluku was instigated not just by Maluku Christians but by Israeli and American agents intent on breaking up Indonesia.

His colleagues in Yogyakarta told me that it was Irfan who pressed Abu Bakar Ba'asyir to commit himself to the establishment of an above-ground organization dedicated to the cause of state implementation of shariah law. The organization that he finally helped to establish at a national congress in early August 2000, and in which he played a senior executive role, was the MMI. Ba'asyir was elected the commander (*amir*) of the organization's legislative council (*Ahlul Halli Wal 'Aqdi*), a position he retained until 2008. A skilled and hard-working manager, Irfan was appointed national executive and was responsible for the Yogyakarta headquarters' day-to-day operations.

At the time of its establishment at the August 2000 congress, the MMI was intended to assemble a broad coalition of Islamist and mainline groupings who agreed on the importance of implementing a state-codified variety of Islamic law (Awwas 2001, 2003). It included among its members Habib Rizieq Shihab of the FPI, along with such leading democratic Islamists as the Cornell-educated intellectual, Deliar Noer (1926–2008). Although in his conversations with me Irfan made no secret of his personal support for Bin Laden's global campaign against the United States, his public statements with regard to domestic as opposed to international politics were careful and nonviolent. He emphasized the need to build a broad coalition so as to move peacefully toward the replacement of the current "Western" system of democracy with a state based on Islamic law.

In the months following its founding in August 2000, these measured appeals allowed the MMI to grow rapidly. In its first two years, the MMI established branch offices in thirty cities and towns across Indonesia. The MMI added to its air of militancy-with-respectability by recruiting prominent Muslim intellectuals long associated with shariah causes but well known for their moderation in matters of state. Out of public view, however, the core Jema'ah Islamiyah cadres to whom the senior MMI leadership was linked fell into bitter infighting. Enough of the struggle became known to the broader public as to undermine MMI efforts to present itself as a within-the-system movement for the implementation of Islamic law.

Taking exception to Irfan's and the Yogyakarta leadership's tactical moderation, a wing of the JI led by Riduan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, continued to call for armed attacks on the United States and its Muslim-world allies in the aftermath of the American invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001. In February 2002, Hambali was identified by Singapore authorities as the mastermind of a plot to attack Western embassies and U.S. naval ships in the Singapore region. Malaysian authorities also identified Hambali as the person who, in January 2000, had arranged accommodations in Malaysia for two of the hijackers of the *American Airlines Flight 77* that crashed into the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Philippine authorities also alleged that Hambali had been involved in a 1995 plot to blow up U.S. passenger jets. The International Crisis Group also implicated the Hambali wing of the JI in the bombings of Christian churches on Christmas Eve 2000 (ICG 2002b:12). In February of 2003, Indonesian authorities brought formal charges against Ba'asyir and his colleagues for these actions. However, Ba'asyir was eventually cleared of all charges.

It was the bombings in Kuta, Bali, on October 12, 2002, however, that finally brought the JI into full public scrutiny. Police interrogations confirmed that, after Abdullah Sungkar passed away in November 1999, the organization's younger militants had made clear their dissatisfaction with the selection of Abu Bakar Ba'asyir as the JI leader and with his efforts to establish the MMI. Although, as he told me in 2002, Ba'asyir had always agreed with the need for armed struggle, he is said to have disagreed with the plan for an escalation in violent attacks after September 11, 2001. The disagreement was, however, one of tactics, not principle. Ba'asyir told me that he worried that an escalation of the violence would only invite a government crackdown and push the Megawati government toward closer cooperation with the United States.

The Break With Ba'asyir

Tensions over strategies continued to divide the larger MMI leadership. Eventually these tensions pitted Irfan Awwas against Ba'asyir himself. The Indonesian media account of the dispute was that, in 2006, Irfan and the Yogyakarta-based MMI executive demanded changes in Ba'asyir's style of leadership. Ba'asyir had just finished serving three years in prison on charges that he had been involved in

the Bali bombings. A few days prior to Ba'asyir's release in 2006, I met with Irfan at the MMI headquarters in Yogyakarta to discuss the MMI's strategic plans after Ba'asyir's return. I had expected Irfan to say that he was preparing to welcome Ba'asyir home with a joyous public celebration.

To my surprise, however, Irfan responded to my question with a frown. He confided that he was worried about the MMI's future because Ba'asyir's two sons, Abdul Rohim and Rasyid Ridho, had made clear that *they* were to take the lead in escorting their father from prison back to Central Java (ICG 2010:2). Startling me even further with his candor, Irfan also said that he had heard that the two sons were talking of establishing an organization entirely independent of the MMI. As events turned out, in early 2008, the two sons did just that, establishing what they called the "Abu Bakar Ba'asyir Center." More surprising yet, the two sons excluded Irfan and his MMI colleagues from the center's executive and declared their organization independent of the MMI (ICG 2010).

Ba'asyir and his sons' actions angered Irfan and his MMI colleagues, and the dispute exploded into full public view in April 2008. That month Irfan and his allies accused Ba'asyir's sons of attempting to destroy the MMI with their establishment of the Ba'asyir Center. On July 13 of that year, Ba'asyir responded to these accusations by resigning from the MMI. Ba'asyir also responded to Irfan's criticisms by accusing the MMI executive board of departing from the true principles of Islamic governance. The latter, he claimed, authorize consultation (*shura*) between a leader and a council of advisors but do not in any way require the leader to abide by board recommendations. In a conversation with me, Irfan responded no less bluntly, accusing Ba'asyir of promoting a cult of personality and a "Shi'i" style of leadership.

The MMI and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir were never able to resolve their differences. In September 2008, Ba'asyir set up a rival and more militant organization, the Jama'ah Ansharut Tauhid (JAT; see ICG 2010). The JAT never gained national traction, but it did achieve what had long been one of Ba'asyir's aims: to establish a clandestine camp where JAT fighters could undergo military training. For years, Ba'asyir had talked about the need to establish such a training center. He had made one such appeal in his inaugural address at the MMI congress in 2000 and in his conversation with me in 2002. However, like me, most analysts had assumed this was a long-term dream. Set up in an isolated portion of Aceh, the training camp was discovered by Indonesian security forces in February 2010. A few weeks later, police raided the Jakarta headquarter of the JAT, arresting three fundraisers. Although the raid dealt a crippling blow to the JAT, Ba'asyir in the meantime had succeeded in taking more than one-half of the MMI's 130 regional branches into the JAT. The damage to the MMI was in fact even more crippling than these figures imply. The online community of anti-system radicals sided overwhelmingly with Ba'asyir and condemned Irfan and the MMI leadership for working to curry favor with state officials.

Although the MMI has survived to this day, the organization is today a shadow of its former self. Although Irfan has attempted to link the MMI to popular causes

like the 2016–17 mobilization against Governor Ahok in Jakarta, the MMI's influence in the campaign was minimal. The national coalition the MMI once led has today disintegrated, and the MMI has not played a leading role in any national campaign in more than ten years.

The one exception to this pattern only illustrates the MMI's current impasse. With the rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS/Daesh), a bitter debate broke out in Indonesia over whether to heed the Daesh leadership's appeal for Muslims around the world to declare their allegiance to the Islamist caliphate. Consistent with his post-MMI turn, in 2014 Abu Bakar Ba'asyir pledged his loyalty to ISIS in a statement issued from his prison cell. Irfan and the MMI executive, by contrast, issued a declaration denouncing Daesh, calling it brutal, illegitimate, and un-Islamic (Awwas 2014). In a conversation with me, Irfan was even harsher in his condemnations. The MMI statements provoked a bitter rebuke from Ba'asyir and JAT representatives, who pointed to the MMI declaration as proof that the organization was not seriously committed to the establishment of a state based on Islamic law.

The next year the MMI leadership demonstrated that it had not given up on the cause of international solidarity, nor of ties with organizations regarded as having ideological affinity with al-Qa'eda. In November 2014, Irfan and the successor since 2008 to Ba'asyir as the spiritual leader of the MMI, Muhammad Thalib, led a fifteen-day visit of MMI leaders to Syria. There the delegation met with representatives of the Jabhat al-Nusra organization. Although since 2016 it has sought to win international support by downplaying its earlier ties to bin Laden, al-Nusra has long had ties to the global al-Qa'eda network. The MMI's online journal, *Risalah Mujahidin*, celebrated the MMI visit, highlighting, among other things, the aid MMI representatives brought to al-Nusra, and the presence of Indonesian volunteers among al-Nusra fighters. Foremost among those featured in the MMI report was Irfan's nephew, Ridwan Abdul Hayyi. In March of the following year, the boyish fighter was killed by a cannon projectile shot from Syrian government tanks.

Although their internationalist ties and their commitment to the struggle for a global caliphate remain unwavering, Irfan and the MMI leadership have continued to distance themselves from Ba'asyir and his cult of personality. But the MMI has paid a high price for its tactical moderation. The great majority of hardline activists left the MMI when Ba'asyir formed the JAT. Most of the once bustling MMI offices established in thirty towns across Indonesia in the early 2000s have today closed. The MMI headquarter in Yogyakarta is on most days quiet.

The MMI's precipitous decline reflects several realities with regard to Islamist activism a quarter century after Indonesia's return to electoral democracy. As Ahnaf (2021:158) has observed, since the heyday of shariah by-law formation in the early 2000s, much of the Muslim public has concluded that such legislation has at best had an only marginal impact on national politics (see Chapter 7). But the MMI has been torn by an even greater contradiction. Unwilling to engage in the militant-for-hire clientelism through which the FPI and Laskar Jihad secured backing from

well-heeled patrons, the MMI has been starved of operational resources. Unwilling to proceed down the path of violent radicalism, the MMI has seen its support in hard-line jihadist circles weaken as well.

In our last meeting in Yogyakarta in August 2018, I asked Irfan a deliberately pointed question about the MMI strategy for the long term. I did so, I said, as someone who considered himself a friend of Irfan even while making clear my disagreement with his political views. "After all these years of conflict with Ba'asyir," I said, "what prospect do you see for the MMI and your own career as an activist for shariah causes?" With a shrug and a sad smile, Irfan responded that he and the MMI's current amir, Mohammad Thalib, have concluded that there is just one realistic way to achieve a comprehensive implementation of Islamic shariah in Indonesia. It involves continuing education and the formation of communities (*jemaah*) of pious Muslims whose daily behavior will demonstrate the justice and beauty of Islamic law. I smiled a bit skeptically and said, "But isn't that what you have always favored, and do you think the strategy is working?" I don't think I was imagining the feeling of sadness that seemed to flash across Irfan's face. He looked at me wistfully and responded, "That's the model of the Prophet. And, well, we can do no other than he."

Conclusion: Islamism's Agonistic Plurality

Although the details of the MMI's decline are unique, the contradictions that led to the organization's collapse are illustrative of broader dynamics in the militant wings of Indonesia's exclusivist Islamist movement. The continuing progress of various programs of Islamic revival in the post-New Order period has had an ambivalent impact. On the one hand, the revival has brought a stronger awareness among segments of the Muslim public that a proper profession of Islam requires both knowledge and practice of Islamic shariah, however the latter is understood. As has been the case over the course of Indonesian history, some in the militant wing of the state-shariah movement have grown impatient with the pace of the campaign's progress and pressed for aggressive or even violent mobilization. Notwithstanding its efforts to build an above-ground mass movement in the 2000s, the JI and its JAT successor have been illustrative of this current. But their history also demonstrates that, as a national political strategy, this militant tack has failed to gain traction. Today armed jihadism is less popular than ever since Indonesia's return to electoral democracy in 1998–9 (see ICG 2010).

The MMI's history again sheds light on the social circumstances underlying this failure. The dispute between Ba'asyir and his followers, on one hand, and Awwas and the MMI executive, on the other, was never just a matter of personality differences. I know from my conversations with Irfan in the early 2000s that he once shared Ba'asyir's confidence that Indonesia was on the cusp of a great transformation, one that promised to replace the Pancasila nation with a Muslim supremacist state. During the first five years of our annual conversations (1999–2004), Awwas

and his key legal advisor on matters of Islamic jurisprudence, Muhammad Thalib, made clear that they were confident that the Indonesian public was rallying to their understanding of Islamic law and their rejection of Pancasila pluralism. In these and other conversations, Irfan and Thalib repeatedly emphasized that the shariah is not something that should or could be adjusted in light of national culture or democratic citizenship. Both spoke disparagingly of the idea popular in some national-minded legal circles that Indonesia might be able to develop its own "national" school of Islamic law (*madhhab*). They were equally skeptical of modernizing reformists who sought not a literal application of an unchanging shariah but a shariah premised on the "higher aims of the law" (*maqasid al-shariah*; Hefner 2016a; Johnston 2007; Kamali 2008b). In much the same spirit, Irfan and Thalib explained that Indonesia's Pancasila citizenship would have to be replaced by *dhimmihood* institutions, and non-Muslims were to be tolerated only if they acknowledged Muslim supremacy and paid a *jizya* tax.

In the years between the MMI's founding in 2000 and its decline after 2006, the movement's "anti-national" understanding of Islamic law caused growing unease among many activists earlier aligned with the MMI coalition. By 2006–8, my interviews with some 100 activists and intellectuals active in MMI circles in the early 2000s revealed that the majority now took exception to the MMI's claim that the implementation of Islamic law required that Indonesia's constitution and nation-state framework be abolished. From a research perspective, what made this change of heart especially intriguing was that it was clear to me that Irfan himself was aware of this shift in membership sentiment. At the same time, Irfan and his colleagues were unwilling to engage in the transactional deals with oligarchs and bosses in which Islamists like Habib Rizieq of the FPI regularly engaged. But the price for holding so tightly to high-minded principles was growing ineffectuality in a post-Suharto Indonesia where many in the Muslim public showed an interest in observing shariah but were uninterested in making its implementation a core political priority (Chapter 2; Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018).

Another striking illustration of the Islamist dilemma, one with which I end this chapter, has to do with a neo-Salafi movement known as Wahdah Islamiyah (WI). WI was founded in Makassar in southern Sulawesi in the early 2000s. As Chaplin has shown in a compelling study, the movement today has 120 branches across Indonesia (Chaplin 2018, 2021; IPAC 2018) and is the largest of the country's five newly organized Salafi movements. What most distinguishes WI from its rivals is that, from 2010 onward, the movement promoted active cooperation with state agencies, including the police force. More generally, the group "has become adept at combining religious and national terminology in order to 'locate' themselves within nationally oriented narratives of Islamic revival" (Chaplin 2018:209; cf. IPAC 2018).

These and other examples show that as a result of exclusivist Islamists' inability to make progress in the electoral arena we have witnessed a change in normativities and tactics: away from earlier schemes to establish a so-called Islamic

state, and toward co-existence with the ideals of the nation-state and a more or less market-based economy. However, even as they have made these accommodations, exclusivist Islamists in groups like the WI have continued to press for the realization of a differentiated and asymmetrical rather than equal citizenship. In this sense, theirs is not a "post-Islamism" in Asef Bayat's sense of the term (Bayat 2017) but a programmatically narrowed Islamism. But it is a significant shift in exclusivist Islamist ideals nonetheless.

The shift centers on two critical points: on the nature of the ethical values that should predominate in the public sphere, and on the question of citizen recognition, not least with regard to whether non-Muslim citizens should be recognized as equal with their Muslim compatriots. Chaplin rightly notes that WI activists seek "to alter the membership boundaries of Indonesian citizenship so as to preference Muslims at the expense of non-Muslims" (ibid.). With the notable exception of internationalist groups like HTI (Ahnaf 2011:021; Osman 2018), the shift away from anti-national shariah projects and toward a new accommodation with nationhood and citizenship has been one of the most striking trends in Islamist circles since the peak period of the "conservative turn" from 2005 to 2010. The MMI's foundering over questions of nation and citizenship shows that the changes Chaplin so vividly recounts in WI circles actually began years earlier in many Islamist organizations and involved a far larger number of networks and organizations than WI alone. But equally striking is the fact that this shift retains a commitment to a Muslim supremacist citizenship at odds with inclusive understandings of national belonging.

Rather than a full Islamic state, this question of citizenship and recognition is likely to remain the critical one here in democratic Indonesia. Seen from this perspective, the conservative turn discussed in this book is a significant evolution but its complexity and dynamics are not adequately captured in the term "conservative." Rather than being conservative in any literal sense of the term, Indonesia's exclusivist Islamists aspire to be repressively transformative. They seek to do away with not just the Pancasila state but an entire assemblage of epistemological and ethical traditions through which Indonesian Muslims have understood and practiced Islam and citizen belonging. It was in part because their proposals were seen as radical and transformative rather than conservative or restorative that exclusivist Islamists' proposals have faltered in post-Suharto Indonesia. And this failure to capture the Muslim public and, from there, the state has led many exclusivist Islamists to conclude that, rather than pressing for the establishment of a so-called Islamic state, they must refocus their efforts on the Muslim community and the public sphere – which is to say, the formal and informal sites of educational socialization where Muslim Indonesians learn Islam and their sense of themselves as Indonesians.

As the next chapter will show, Muslim education in Indonesia has been a site of especially fierce competition over how to know Islam and to be a citizen of Indonesia. In this sphere too, various currents of exclusivist Islamism have made

some headway in the *Reformasi* era. However, in doing so they have also stimulated a no-less-intensive response from the Muslim proponents of an Indonesian variety of inclusive and multireligious citizenship.

Note

1 This information is based on press reports and my interviews with Syafi'i Anwar and Ahmad Suaedy in December 2008 and again in July 2009.

5

ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND ETHICAL PRIORITIZATION

The proliferation of Islamist militias in the early *Reformasi* period and the Bali bombings in October 2002 raised concerns about the possible involvement of Indonesia's Islamic schools in political radicalization. Coming just a few years after the rise of the Taliban and al-Qa'ida in Afghanistan, the involvement of several *pesantren* graduates in vigilantism and extremist violence added to these concerns. Some analysts saw worrying parallels between the situation in Indonesia and developments two decades earlier in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Abuza 2003). Observers noted that Afghanistan's Taliban had initially trained in madrasas located near refugee camps along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. During the 1980s, enrollments in these madrasas had grown, in part as a result of the inability of Pakistan's national educational system to meet the needs of poor citizens (Zaman 2002:137–9). In the course of their expansion, a significant number of these borderland madrasas had developed an oppositional disposition not just to foreign occupation but to the reformist intentions of state educational ministries.

In the aftermath of the East Asian financial crisis of late 1997 to 2001, Indonesia had also experienced a serious decline in state educational capacity. Although in the early 1990s, the country had announced an ambitious goal of achieving nine years of universal education, enrollments in state schools plummeted during the financial crisis, especially among the poor. In contrast, enrollments in *pesantrens* and madrasas grew at more than twice the rate of general schools (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007; Hefner 2009; Jackson and Parker 2008:29).

Anxieties with regard to Islamic schooling in Indonesia were not limited, however, to Western policy analysts. On October 1, 2005, south Bali was shaken by a second terrorist attack. This time twenty people died, most of them Indonesians;

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-5

more than one hundred were injured. Shocked by the wanton killing, the Indonesian vice president, Jusuf Kalla – an establishment politician known for his cordial ties to Muslim educators – blamed the bombing on militants from an unnamed Islamic boarding school and warned that the government was going to have to take action against schools promoting "irresponsible" actions. A few weeks later, Kalla startled Muslim educators further when he announced that the government was preparing to fingerprint students in the country's 16,000-strong Islamic boarding school (*pesantren*) network (Tempo 2005:38–9).

On the day Kalla issued his statement, I was in Indonesia visiting Islamic schools, as part of a collaborative project with the late Azyumardi Azra and other researchers from the Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta. In all my years of Indonesian research, few memories are more vivid than those from these school visits in the weeks following Kalla's remarks. In school after school, there was a palpable sense of not so much outrage at the vice-president's allegations but disappointment and embarrassment that anyone in the national leadership would suspect Muslim educators of betraying their religion and nation. Teachers and administrators pleaded with my Indonesian colleagues and me to help correct this impression, asking (to quote one boarding school administrator from Jombang, East Java), "How could our own government not recognize that we are the proudest of Indonesian nationalists?"

Against this turbulent backdrop, this chapter provides an overview of the structure and evolution of Islamic education in modern Indonesia. The chapter emphasizes that, rather than being hotbeds of anti-system activism, Indonesia's Islamic schools have for decades served as cultural brokers for Muslim youth's interaction with the two institutions central to all modern societies: the nation-state and the economic marketplace. Rather than battening down and setting out on a separatist course, Muslim educators have engaged these powerful institutions in a collaborative way and sought to carry over life skills and ways of knowing from these public spheres to educational institutions. In these and other regards, Indonesia's Islamic schools bear a striking resemblance to religious schools in countries like the United States. As Jose Casanova has shown, in the modern U.S. Catholic religious institutions fell "under the gravitational force" of the democratic state and the market (Casanova 1994:21). However, even as they developed this collaborative relationship, they also challenged these institutions' claims "to be exempt from extraneous [i.e., religious] normative considerations."

This chapter examines the political, cultural, and epistemological changes that have propelled Islamic schooling's modern transformations. It explores the implications of these changes for the three developments at the heart of this book: the plurality of ways of knowing and practicing Islam, the implications of different varieties of schooling and ethical practice for citizen recognition and belonging, and the distributional coalitions that have brought certain currents of knowledge and ethics into ascendance while marginalizing others.

Varieties of Islamic Education

Indonesia today has some 16,000 residential boarding schools (*pesantrens)* and 50,000 Islamic day schools. Most of the latter institutions are referred to as madrasas or "Islamic schools" (*sekolah Islam*). In the Indonesian lexicon, the latter terms (*madrasa, sekolah Islam*) refer to schools that offer instruction in various aspects of Islamic tradition while also conforming to the curriculum of the Ministry of Education as stipulated under the 1989 Law on Education. Schools meet this requirement by dedicating 70% of their class day to the teaching of general educational subjects. Of the forty-five million students currently enrolled in the formal educational system from primary to secondary school, a full six million or 14% are enrolled in madrasas (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007). About 3.5 million students attend *pesantrens*, half of them boarding at school and the rest living with relatives or acquaintances in nearby homes (Jackson and Parker 2008:24).

Indonesian law requires all children today to receive nine years of schooling. Youth who enroll in a *pesantren* before meeting this national requirement typically complete the state-mandated curriculum by taking classes in general subjects in a madrasa or Islamic school set up on the grounds of the larger *pesantren* complex. The state regulates Islamic education and provides small subsidies averaging about 20% of total costs to *pesantren* boarding schools and a significantly larger amount (averaging 56% of operating revenues) to madrasa day schools (Jackson and Parker 2008:28). All *pesantren* boarding schools are privately owned and operated. Some 91.5% of madrasas and Islamic schools are privately operated; the remainder are financed and operated by the state (Tayeb 2018:2).

These general facts noted, any characterization of an Islamic educational system as large and decentralized as Indonesia's risks overgeneralization. Nonetheless, the central current in Islamic education in this country is clear. The most striking characteristic of the great majority of Indonesia's 66,000 Islamic schools is neither political radicalism, Salafi exclusivism, nor counter-cultural enclavism. It is instead the determination of Muslim educators to carry over the ideals of Indonesian nationhood and the public's demand for marketable educational skills into their mission of training youth at once pious, modern, and proudly Indonesian.

For most of the last century, Islamic education in Indonesia has become more, not less, involved with general education and instruction in the sciences of the world (*ulum al-dunya*) in addition to the sciences of religion (*ulum al-din*). This trend was already apparent during the first years of the twentieth century, when Indonesia like much of the world entered what the historian Theodore Zeldin has aptly called the "Age of Education" (Zeldin 1977). This was a period when rulers in Egypt, Iran, and the Ottoman heartland were using the greatly expanded powers of the modern state to reduce the influence of long established madrasa-colleges while also putting in place a largely secular state educational system (Fortna 2000:12; Ringer 2001:12; Starrett 1998).

In Indonesia, the pattern of educational development in the religious school sector was strikingly different. *Madrasa*-like institutions in their classical sense – that is, boarding schools for intermediate and advanced learning in the Islamic sciences – were a recently introduced institution, having become widespread only in the final years of the nineteenth century and in a manner at a distance from state power (Hefner 2009; Subhan 2012:73–131). As a result, rather than the late Ottoman or Egyptian pattern of state-initiated containment and curricular secularization, in late colonial Indonesia formal education in a madrasa-like environment was actually in ascendance and would shortly come to play a greater rather than diminished role in modern Muslim culture and society.

Although often overlooked in accounts of Islamic schooling in the country, the most remarkable feature of Islamic education in Indonesia is that this newly established, madrasa-like institution dedicated to the Islamic sciences did not enjoy its monopoly standing in the Muslim community for very long. In the early years of the twentieth century modernist Muslim reformers in groups like the Muhammadiyah committed themselves to the establishment of a network of what they called "Islamic schools" (*sekolah Islam*), first in Java and then across the archipelago (Subhan 2012:135–72). Unlike *pesantrens*, these Islamic schools dedicated the greatest portion of their curriculum to nonreligious subjects like mathematics, history, and science. No less significant, courses on Islam in these schools downplayed the importance of the classical Islamic commentaries (*kitab kuning*) prioritized in Islamic boarding schools. Contrary again to the pattern seen in Iran, Egypt, and the late Ottoman empire (see Zaman 2002:143–75; Zeghal 2016), none of these reforms in the Islamic educational sector were the product of top-down initiatives forced on a reluctant religious establishment. They bore witness instead to both the Muslim public's and Muslim educators' aspirations for a new understanding and practice of Islam in the world, an aspiration seen as consistent with rather than oppositional to the nation-state and modern economic life.

The Muslim public's interest in combining piety with career training and the sciences of the world became even more pronounced during the first years of independence in the 1950s. By this time, the Dutch had departed, and a new national class structure was taking shape. In this context of greatly increased social mobility, general education was seen as a passport to employment and membership in the new middle class. From the 1970s onward, the conviction that education can and should serve the interests of piety and character as well as citizenship and socioeconomic mobility provided the rationale for growing cooperation between Muslim educators and reform-minded officials from the MORA and Education and Culture. In the 1990s, the steady growth of the new Muslim middle class converged with the Islamic resurgence to make this interest in integrating piety, national belonging, and career-relevant knowledge all the stronger.

As will become clear over the course of this chapter, Muslim educators' openness to reform also reflects what at first sight appears as the paradoxical relationship between traditionalist Muslim educators, like those affiliated with Nahdlatul

Ulama, and modernist reformists in groups like Muhammadiyah. For more than a century, educators from these two organizations have competed for the hearts and minds of Muslim students and their parents (Abdullah 1971; Subhan 2012). Rather than creating a zero-sum contest between the two educational movements, however, this competition spurred creative cross-fertilization, with educators in both camps learning and borrowing from the other educational community. With the expansion of the State Islamic University system since the 1970s (see the subsequent section), borrowings across the two Islamic educational networks have only increased. The overall effect of these interactions has been, in Zamakhsyari Dhofier's words, a remarkable "intellectualization of Islamic studies in Indonesia" (Dhofier 1992). More specifically, the process has also encouraged a large number of Indonesian Muslims to engage in a epistemological reorientation long advocated by supporters of Islamic renewal in other parts of the world but often resisted by tradition-minded educators: linking the ways believers know and practice Islam to the empirically grounded ways in which they come to study and engage the social and natural worlds (see Khan 2019; Moosa 2014; Ramadan 2009).

Although Muslim schools in Indonesia have a long history of intellectual dynamism and expansiveness, the school sector today still faces serious challenges. Some of the most urgent involve practical and financial deficits. With the notable exception of a few recently established elite Muslim schools, most independent Muslim schools have less funding and a less affluent student body than their state-school counterparts. Other challenges center on political and public-ethical matters, including questions of citizen inclusivity and gender equality. On one hand, the higher educational wing of the state Islamic educational sector has been at the vanguard of "gender mainstreaming" and democratic education (see Chapters 1 and 2; Jackson and Bahrissalim 2007; Kull 2005). Even prior to the *Reformasi* era, the state Islamic educational sector pioneered the development of civic educational courses on citizen equality and inclusivity, playing a role even more pivotal than the country's non-Islamic public schools (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007; Jackson and Bahrissalim 2007; Saeed 1999; Ubaedillah 2018). At the same time, however, surveys and ethnographic research show that, however much they may have been exposed to civic educational courses, many graduates of these state-sponsored programs have exclusive views on matters of citizenship and non-Muslims. Other studies, including my own surveys of 2,000 educators (see the subsequent section), show that most graduates subscribe to the principles of Indonesian nationalism and the Pancasila. But many also hold exclusive views on matters like non-Muslim leadership and the construction of Christian churches in Muslim neighborhoods (see also PPIM 2021). In this small but influential wing of Islamic schooling, there is indeed evidence of a "conservative turn," although the "turn" is for the most part not new, and it is not particularly "conservative" in the literal sense of the term (Chapters 2, 4, and 7).

On matters of gender, the situation is similarly mixed. Notwithstanding the efforts of State Islamic Universities to promote gender mainstreaming, "many

textbooks are gender-biased, and the institutional culture of schools and universities still favors men" (Jackson 2013:1; see also van Doorn-Harder 2006:167). Surveys of Muslim educators confirm this ambivalence with regard to gender matters. Although Indonesian women participate in the labor force at a rate (53%) two to three times that of their sisters in Middle Eastern and North African nations (Haghighat-Sordellini 2010:87–92; Cameron, Suarez, and Rowell 2019), cultural norms on women's equality, employment, and domestic roles lag well behind Indonesian women's real-world achievements.

Ambivalence with regard to educational programs promoting citizen inclusivity and gender equity has been especially pronounced among individuals and educators involved with exclusivist Islamist movements (Gaylord 2007). As noted in the previous chapter, movements of this sort operate independently of state educational initiatives and their numbers have grown somewhat since Indonesia's return to electoral democracy in 1998–1999. I discuss these exclusivist currents in Muslim education in Indonesia in the final section of this chapter and assess their implications for efforts to build a new Muslim public ethic of democracy and citizen inclusivity.

Centering Islamic Knowledge

To appreciate the distinctiveness of Islamic education in Indonesia today compared to other parts of the Muslim-majority world, it is helpful to review the culture and history of Islamic learning in Muslim civilization generally and in Indonesian history in particular. In an article published more than a half century ago, the celebrated anthropologist of postwar Indonesia, Clifford Geertz, underscored the centrality of religious education in Muslim societies and the pivotal role of Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*, *pondok pesantren*) in Indonesia. Using Java as his point of reference, Geertz observed,

> There have been pesantren-like institutions in Java since the Hindu-Buddhist period [i.e., from the second to sixteenth centuries], and most likely even before, for the cluster of student disciples collected around a holy man is a pattern common throughout south and southeast Asia.
>
> *(Geertz 1960b:231)*

With the conversion of growing numbers of people to Islam, Geertz added, "[W]hat had been Hindu-Buddhist now became Islamic, a new wine in a very old bottle" (ibid.).

As Geertz's comment illustrates, Western scholars have long assumed that there were continuities between Islamic schools in Southeast Asia and their pre-Islamic predecessors. However, the wine-bottle metaphor obscures the question of just how much Muslim schools in Indonesia reflect pre-Islamic legacies and how much, by contrast, they reflect evolving engagements with centers of Islamic learning in

the Middle East and South Asia. Since Geertz wrote his article, four facts have become apparent:

- Madrasa-like institutions for Islamic learning were late to arrive in the archipelago, becoming an ascendant institutional presence only in the late nineteenth century – several centuries after much of the population had already converted to Islam.
- The deferred arrival of madrasa-like educational institutions ensured that the knowledge and practice of Islam prior to the late nineteenth century were less legalistic than was the case in Muslim lands where madrasas had long had a towering societal presence.
- Once madrasa-like institutions had been established across the archipelago, they had less in common with earlier Hindu-Buddhist institutions than they did the curricula, organization, and epistemologies characteristic of madrasas in the Middle East and South Asia (Azra 1992; Laffan 2011:26–39).
- Over the past century, Islamic educators in Indonesia have differed from many of their counterparts in the Middle East and South Asia in having a more collaborative relationship with state officials and especially the Ministry of Religious Affairs; the amical relationship has reinforced educators' willingness to cooperate with state officials so as to overcome educational dualism and rethink what must be prioritized in Islamic learning.

To appreciate the scale of these changes and the distinctiveness of Islamic schooling in Indonesia, it is helpful to review what is known about the historical development of Islamic schooling in the Middle East and South Asia and then compare that history with the evolution of Islamic learning here in Indonesia.

Learning as Worship

Islam is a religion of the divine word, and religious study has long been regarded as an act of worship in its own right. "The study and transmission of the revealed word of God and the sayings of His prophet, and of the system of law to which the revelation pointed, are the fundamental service God demands of his creatures" (Berkey 1992:5). The South African–born scholar and madrasa graduate (currently teaching at the University of Notre Dame), Ebrahim Moosa, observes in a similar spirit, "Knowledge opens the door for humans to adore and serve God with sincerity in order to reach a heightened sense of self-awareness. Ultimately, the goal of learning is to earn God's pleasure and approval" (Moosa 2015:194; cf. Gade 2004).

In both classical and contemporary times, religious study for many Muslim youth begins with learning to read and recite, but not necessarily literally understand, chapters (*surah*) from the Qur'an, often beginning with the last of its thirty chapters (Laffan 2011:33). The Qur'an is given special priority in processes of

Islamic learning because it is understood as the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (c. 570–632 C.E.) by way of the Archangel Jibril (Gabriel) between 610 and 632 C.E. (see Lawrence 2006; Saeed 2006). Historians of Islam agree that, during the Prophet's lifetime, most of the Holy Book's chapters were memorized and transmitted orally rather than written down. Although scholars disagree as to when the Qur'an finally assumed a finished manuscript form, the most widely accepted view is that the full recension took place not long after the death of the Prophet, at the instruction of the Caliphs Umar (r., 634–44) and Uthman (r., 644–56; see Bulliet 1994:29; Guillot 2006:41–57).

During the first centuries of the Muslim era in the Middle East, Qur'anic study typically took place in mosques or in small, free-standing schools known as *kuttab* or *maktab*. Although in modern times the *kuttab* has at times been freighted with additional educational burdens (including, as in late nineteenth-century Egypt, providing instruction in secular subjects; see Starrett 1998:29), for the most part the institution has remained true to its founding mission, serving as a nonresidential school where youths learn to read and recite the Qur'an.

Not long into the Islamic era, religious learning came to include subjects more varied than Qur'anic study. In the Middle East over the course of the eighth and ninth centuries C.E., the *hadith* – the canonical sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad and some among his associates as recorded by a chain of verified narrators (*isnad*; see Bulliet 1994:13; Moosa 2015:148–50) – were gathered into standardized collections and came to be recognized as the second of Islam's scriptural sources. Drawing on these *hadith* collections for guidance, scholars were also able to compose the jurisprudential commentaries that eventually became the foundation for Islam's legal schools (*madhhabs*). Although at first there were many more than the four major Sunni schools (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali) that exist today (Shi'ism has three primary legal schools), by the twelfth century most Sunni jurists identified with one of the four primary schools. The composition and standardization of Muslim jurisprudence (*fiqh*) were all part of the historical process whereby scholars of the law (*fuqaha)* came to play a central role in religious education and public ethical affairs (Calder 1993:164; Hallaq 2009; Moosa 2015:22).

Inevitably the expansion of hadith and legal scholarship during these early centuries also meant that the period of study required to achieve excellence in these fields also increased (Berkey 2003:7; Gaborieau 1997:1–10). During the first part of this two-century period, most study took place in informal learning circles (Ar., *halaq*, sing. *halqa*) operated out of homes, bazaar stalls, and mosques under the direction of a master scholar (*shaykh*). By the end of the ninth century, however, mosques that provided advanced religious study also began to erect hostels for resident students. In the tenth century, some communities in the Khurasan region of what is today eastern Iran and western Afghanistan went further, establishing the first madrasas – free-standing residential colleges for intermediate and advanced learning in jurisprudence and the Islamic sciences (Makdisi 1981). The institution

quickly spread westward to cities and towns in the Arab and Persian heartland. Madrasas were funded by pious endowments known as *waqf* (pl. *awqaf*). These trusts were recognized in Islamic law and were the lifeblood of funding for the array of philanthropic institutions that flourished in Muslim-majority lands, including early modern Indonesia (Fauzia 2013:31–63; Hoexter 2002).

A critical juncture in this early stage of madrasa expansion occurred in the eleventh century C.E. In that period the celebrated vizier of the Turkic Seljuk empire, Nizam al-Mulk (1018–92), established a network of madrasas across the empire's expanse, from what is today western Afghanistan to Syria and Anatolia. In historical accounts of this period, the founding of these educational institutions is understood as a key component in what has come to be known as the Sunni revival. The revival centered on the efforts of Seljuk rulers to strengthen linkages among Sunni scholars, schools, and state officials in the face of what these officials perceived as a growing Shi'i challenge (Berkey 2003:187). The Seljuk rulers did not underwrite Nizam al-Mulk's educational campaign for reasons of piety alone. Instead, as both Kuru (2019a:101–3) and Safi (2006) have demonstrated, they supported his campaign because it allowed the recently ascendant Turkic rulers to present themselves to their Arab and Persian subjects as champions of Sunni Islam.

However varied its promoters' motives, the result of this convergence of educational and political interests was that, by the twelfth century, the madrasa had become "perhaps the most characteristic religious institution of the medieval Near Eastern urban landscape" (Berkey 2003:187). By the thirteenth century, the institution had reached Muslim Spain and India (Bulliet 1994:148–9). In all these locales, *madrasas* educated not just religious scholars but most of the local cultural elite, including poets, mathematicians, medical doctors, government administrators, and astronomers (Arjomand 1999:263–93; Mottahedeh 1997:61). During these same centuries, the madrasa complex gradually assumed a more or less standard form. Most establishments included a mosque, dormitories, and classrooms, as well as a residence for the scholar-director and a washing area for ritual ablutions. Over time, many madrasas also erected mausoleums for the founding scholar and his family. On the assumption that in death as in life the *shaykh* could intercede with God and serve as a channel for divine grace (*barakah*), many founders' tombs became the object of religious pilgrimage (*ziyarah*; see Chambert-Loir and Guillot 1995; Lukens-Bull 2005:28–33; CS Taylor 1999:127–67).

Concurrent with this residential and architectural standardization, the madrasa curriculum also began to take on a more or less regularized form, one that reflected scholars' judgment as to just what should be prioritized in Islamic learning. A typical institution provided instruction in Qur'an recitation (*qira'a*), hadith, Arabic grammar (*nahw*), Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), principles of religion (*usul ad-din*), the sources of the law (*usul al-fiqh*), Islamic mysticism (*tasawwuf*), and philosophical theology (*kalam*). Considerable curricular variation persisted across regions, however, especially where, as in the Mughal and

Ottoman empires, local rulers relied on madrasas to provide training for state officials (Ringer 2001; Robinson 2001).

Where not drawn into the latter task, however, the madrasa remained a notably less formalized and less corporate entity than its institutional counterpart in the late medieval West, the university. The premodern Islamic college never developed boards of governors, a centrally regulated curriculum, or institution-wide examinations as seen in Western universities from the twelfth century onward (Makdisi 1981). At its heart, religious learning remained "fundamentally and persistently an informal affair" (Berkey 2003:17; cf. Lukens-Bull 2005:2–5). Learning was informal in the sense that the process was grounded on the student's instruction under a particular scholar, rather than his passage through a corporately organized educational institution. Consistent with this emphasis, the degree a student earned, known as an *ijaza*, did not involve credentialization from a university corporation but authorization from an individual scholar, testifying to the student's having mastered a particular book under the scholar's guidance. In short, the *ijaza* "had to be given from person to person" (Makdisi 1981:145). As Moosa has noted of madrasa education in modern South Asia, the teacher-student relationship was illustrative of a broader prioritization in the moral economy of Islamic learning: "both erudite activities and the cultivation of spirituality serve as guarantees for the integrity of the education imparted" (Moosa 2015:59).

Many medieval madrasas, particularly those in the Islamic Northeast (Anatolia to India), continued to provide advanced study in nonreligious subjects, including arithmetic, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and poetry (Metcalf 1984; Moosa 2015:124; Zeghal 2016:130). As Kuru (2019a) has emphasized, from the eleventh to the fourteenth century, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine in the Arab Middle East and northern India were the most sophisticated in the world. However, by the end of what historians call the Middle Period, a division of educational labor had emerged, and most Middle Eastern madrasas provided little advanced instruction in the natural and mathematical sciences; general education continued, however, in Mughal India's madrasas (Robinson 2001; Sikand 2005:48). In Arab lands, instruction in sciences of the world had not ended, but much of it had been relocated to royal courts, libraries, hospitals, and the private homes of scholars (Gutas 1998; Sabra 1994).

The madrasa-like institutions that were established in the Indonesian archipelago from the eighteenth century onward were modeled on this latter prototype with its emphasis on the Islamic sciences rather than a curriculum including instruction in the empirical sciences of the world. As a result, until the early twentieth century, the Indonesian counterpart to the Middle Eastern madrasa did not include in its curricula advanced study in non-revealed sciences like mathematics or medicine. Nonetheless, as Lukens-Bull has noted, the institutions retained an openness to nonreligious learning in one important way, in that most provided training in vocational skills, including farming, handicrafts, and trade (Lukens-Bull 2005:65).

Recentering Islam

The evolution of the *madrasa* curriculum in the Muslim Middle East during Islam's formative centuries was part of a broader recentering of Islamic knowledge and authority, the legacy of which has persisted to this day. The recentering had two primary features, each of which anticipated changes in the moral economy of religious knowledge that were to take place in Indonesian Muslim communities several centuries later. First, the rise of *madrasas* led to greater standardization of the body of Islamic knowledge transmitted in institutions of higher religious learning. By the fifteenth century, Bulliet's characterization of changes in the *hadith* tradition is equally applicable to the other core traditions of Islamic knowledge: "The upshot of this process was the development of a homogeneous corpus of authoritative Islamic texts that contributed greatly to a growing uniformity of Islamic belief and practice throughout the vast area in which Muslims lived" (Bulliet 1994:21). A similar process of standardization and prioritization with regard to Islamic legal traditions was to take place in Southeast Asia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Prior to these centuries, there was already a well-established tradition of Muslim learning in the region, but it did not yet prioritize Islamic jurisprudence (Hooker 1983:2; Laffan 2011:85–100).

The recentering of Islamic knowledge in the classical Middle East had implications not only for texts and learning but for religious authority as well. The madrasa and its canon provided clearer criteria for defining different categories of religious knowledge and different types of religious authorities.

> The 'ulama . . . sought to restrict the ability of individuals who possessed only a modicum of intellectual training, or who might even be illiterate, but who nonetheless claimed considerable religious authority among the uneducated masses, to define for their audiences what was properly Islamic.
>
> *(Berkey 2003:229)*

It goes without saying that this "recentering and homogenization" (Berkey 2003:189) of Islamic knowledge, with its prioritization of jurisprudence as the queen of the Islamic sciences, did not do away with other forms of Islamic learning or religiosity. Until the nineteenth century, most of the population in the Middle East was rural and illiterate (Findley 1989). Beyond the ranks of the madrasa-based *ulama*, then, less legalist streams of Islamic learning and piety flourished. As a result, as Shahab Ahmed (2016) has also shown, most of these non-legalist scholars were regarded by both their custodians and the broader Muslim public as the bearers of authentically Islamic traditions of knowledge (Ar. *'ilm*).

Thus, for example, even in cities like late-medieval Cairo, well known for its many *madrasas*, there was no shortage of religious masters unconventional from the perspective of scholars of the law. A colorful case in point was the *shaykh ummi*, an illiterate Muslim master who claimed to get his Islamic knowledge not

from texts and grey-bearded scholars but from dreams of the Prophet and the depths of his own heart. His religious language was "alien to the discourse of the jurists and the more learned Sufis" (Berkey 2003:244). Not far away in Damascus one encountered no less colorful figures. These included the mystic dervishes who

> flouted social and religious norms: dressing in rags or (in some cases) not at all; . . . deliberately disregarding cultic practices such as prayer; publicly indulging in the use of hashish and other intoxicants, and . . . piercing various bodily parts, including their genitals.
>
> *(ibid.:245)*

Notwithstanding the great differences of time and space, the parallels between these unconventional religious figures and the *dhukuns* (mystical healers)*, bomohs* (spirit mediums), and *pawang* (shamans) of early twentieth-century Muslim Southeast Asia are striking. They bear witness to a program of Islamic learning less standardized and more plural than that subsequently prioritized in the archipelago's late-arriving Islamic boarding schools.

The point of this comparison is that, far more than once realized by Western scholars like Clifford Geertz, there are striking parallels between the recentering of religious authority effected with the development of madrasa education in the early medieval Middle East and processes taking place in Muslim Southeast Asia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although madrasa-like institutions were late to arrive in the latter region, once the institutions were in place their impact on the economy of Islamic knowledge bore a striking resemblance to earlier developments in the Muslim Middle East (Azra 1992; Laffan 2011). In particular, the spread of Islamic boarding schools with a curriculum dedicated to jurisprudence and the classical Islamic sciences created new hierarchies of religious authority and new criteria for identifying just what should be prioritized in the knowledge and practice of Islam. Other modes of learning Islam, however, were soon to make their appearance as well.

Educational Modernity

Beginning in Aceh and northern Sumatra and then continuing in areas to the east, large numbers of indigenous peoples in the Indonesian archipelago converted to Islam from the thirteenth century onward; the greatest surge took place from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Whereas large-scale conversion to Islam in the Middle East and North Africa was broadly coincident with the spread of madrasas, the Indonesian archipelago lacked this type of formal educational institutions until the middle of the eighteenth century; the institution became widespread only a century later. In other words, the first centuries of Islamization in Southeast Asia saw the dissemination of Islamic traditions of knowledge and practice, but most

were organized in a non-jurisprudential register. Many "pushed the rationalization of the mystic mode to its furthest conclusions," and "its effect was non- or indeed anti-legalistic" (Hooker 1983:11; cf. Lohlker 2021:193; Ricci 2011).

During the first centuries of Islam's diffusion across the Indonesian archipelago, polities in the region consisted of a diverse panoply of Hindu-Buddhist states, inland chiefdoms, and remote forest tribes. The environmentally checkered nature of the insular environment, and the fact that Islam did not arrive in association with horse-mounted armies of Arab or Turkic warriors, guaranteed that conversion to Islam was a patchwork process, occurring swiftly in some areas and slowly or not at all in others. Until the nineteenth century, centers of advanced learning in the Islamic sciences were few and far between, even though Acehenese and north Sumatran rulers as early as the seventeenth century invited South Asian and Arab scholars to take up residence at their courts (Feener 2013:22; Riddel 2001). Among the Muslim public as a whole, however, formal legal study and the ethical registers with which they are associated were a minor key in the greater Islamic symphony.

Islam's first centuries in Southeast Asia showed two additional features that were to influence what was prioritized in Islamic learning in this early period. At the towering heights of political society, first of all, conversion to Islam often assumed a "raja-centric" face, in the twin sense that rulers were central to the initial conversion process, and there were significant carryovers from courts to the new religious culture. The ruler in Muslim Southeast Asia was "was the primary object of loyalty" (Milner 1995:180). The annals of Islam's early period in the region abound with accounts of how a dream, cure, or other supernatural event led a local ruler to embrace Islam, often after hosting a visiting mystical *shaykh*. After the miracle, the ruler commands his subjects to accept the new faith as well (Madmarn 1999:14; Milner 1995:186; Woodward 1989:32–4). The ruler's centrality in the early organization of Islamic affairs was also seen in his intervention in scholarly disputes, where the ruler's judgment rather than a consensus of scholars often determined which among rival religious opinions prevailed (al-Attas 1986; Riddell 2001:123). Above all else, however, the ruler's pivotal place in Islamic life was expressed in great public rituals, like the *Garebeg Mulud* celebration of the birth of the Prophet, a religious festival sponsored to this day by the Sultanate of Yogyakarta (Woodward 1989:179, 2011:169–92). Rituals like these gave visible form to the ruler's claim to be the axis not of a secular polity but of the Muslim community and the Islamic macrocosm in which it was situated.

A raja-centric profession of Islam was of course not unique to Southeast Asia. In fact, it was typical of the "Persianized monarchies" (Milner 1995:146; see also Woodward 1989:57) found across the Muslim world from the Balkans, Central Asia, and India to the Malay archipelago. In these societies, "[f]ar from being in ideological conflict with Islam, kingship found new ways to express its transcendence in Islamic terms" (Reid 1993:171). However, the fact that Muslim Indonesia lacked a network of independent educational institutions dedicated to advanced study in Islamic jurisprudence was deeply consequential. The rajacentric and

madrasa-thin environment allowed local notables to prioritize those aspects of the law that buttressed the authority of the ruler while downplaying or neglecting many that did not (Burhanudin 2006). For example, in the sultanates of the Malay peninsula, the legal digests utilized in royal courts began their list of Islamic priorities not with rulings from Islamic jurisprudence but with sumptuary regulations that served to distinguish kings from commoners and slaves (Milner 1995:148). As we have seen (Chapter 2), in some parts of the archipelago, especially in Java, the resulting imbalance of power between ruler and legal scholars led to occasional "satirizing of shariah-mindedness" (Milner 1995:150). In a few instances the imbalance even led to the violent repression of *ulama* bold enough to challenge the ruler's prerogatives in religious affairs (Vlekke 1959:175; Woodward 1989:60).

Notwithstanding these tensions, from early on some among Southeast Asia's Muslim scholars became familiar with the standards of religious devotion recognized in distant Muslim lands. From the seventeenth century onward, an Arabic-language "cosmopolis" served to disseminate works of theology, grammar, Prophetic biography, and moral edification to a network of scholars operating across the Indian Ocean region (Azra 1992; Ricci 2011:262–7). Many Southeast Asian Muslim scholars were also active in Sufi orders. Although the majority of Muslims were not formal initiates, an everyday Sufi pietism was the default mode in matters of spiritual learning (Laffan 2011; Lohlker 2021; van Bruinessen 1995:165–200). In this early period too there were non-jurisprudential modes of learning entirely orthodox by the standards of later generations of Muslims. These included the study of Arabic, the Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet, *tasawwuf* mysticism, and Muslim historical epics. More remarkably yet, many of the standard works of the Shafi'i school of law practiced across Southeast Asia today were available in translation in some Muslim territories, most notably in Aceh and the Malay peninsula. Tellingly, however, "the standards works . . . never formed the sole law for local Muslims" (Hooker 1983:9). Meanwhile, away from court in popular society, disputes were handled by local notables drawing on customary (*adat*) regulations (some of which incorporated Islamic references) rather than a standardized body of Islamic jurisprudence (Lindsey 2012:11–15; Peletz 2002:26–38).

The broader landscape of spiritual learning and practice in Muslim society as a whole remained even more variegated. Until well into the twentieth century, traditions of curing, exorcism, ritual dance, and guardian-spirit veneration were practiced across much of the Muslim archipelago (Laderman 1991). Villagers in Java and elsewhere "maintained a rich variety of popular performances, arts, and entertainments," many originally of a non-Islamic nature, even if they came to be reidentified with Islam (Ricklefs 2012:32; cf. Alatas 2021:42, 119). Court-sponsored rituals of guardian- and ancestral-spirit veneration, like the Malay and Javanese rulers' annual offerings to guardian spirits of the mountains and sea, showed that even the exemplary bearers of official Islam recognized an array of supernatural agents (Headley 2004:282–320; Peletz 1997:231–73; Woodward 1989:168). In this pluralized religious landscape, Malay *bomoh* and *pawang*,

Javanese *dhukuns* (Daniels 2009; Geertz 1960a), Sasak spirit mediums (Cederroth 1981), and southern Sulawesi's transgendered priests (*bissu*; see Davies 2006, 2010; Hamonic 1987), all managed to find a place for themselves in the new abode of Islam.

Inevitably, however, the political economy of Islamic knowledge in the Indonesian archipelago was to change. Like their Middle Eastern counterparts a few centuries earlier, Southeast Asian Muslims were about to experience a madrasa-leveraged recentering of Islamic knowledge and authority. Ironically, the process in Muslim Southeast Asia was given greater urgency by the rapid advance of Western colonialism.

Colonialism and Islamic Learning

The first Muslim schools in the archipelago for intermediate-to-advanced learning in jurisprudence and the Islamic sciences were established only in the middle of the eighteenth century; they became widespread from the latter decades of the nineteenth century onwards (see Azra 2003:9; Drewes 1969:11). The first of these schools using a madrasa-like curriculum had various names but included *pesantren* (Java, South Kalimantan), *pondok* (Kalimantan, South Sulawesi, Malay portions of Sumatra), *dayah* (Aceh), and *surau* (West Sumatra). What made all these institutions similar to the classical Middle Eastern madrasa was that their curricula devoted significant attention to Islamic jurisprudence and other classical Islamic sciences (Laffan 2011; Raihani 2014:21).

Developments in the sultanate of Banten in northwestern Java illustrate the breadth of these changes in Islamic learning and practice. With Aceh, Malacca, Patani, Brunei, and coastal central Java, Banten has long been renowned as one of the more normative-minded centers of Islamic learning in Southeast Asia. If one expected any area in the archipelago to have a network of Islamic schools early on, then, Banten would be the place. As early as 1638, Banten's ruler acquired the title of Sultan from the Grand Sharif of Mecca, and in the seventeenth century the kingdom imported a *qadi*-judge from the holy land as well. However, even in Banten, boarding schools (*pesantren*) for advanced study in law and the Islamic sciences did not exist prior to the mid-eighteenth century, and they became socially ascendant only a century later. Prior to that time, wandering religious scholars, including itinerant Arab traders, may have also passed through courts and towns and provided instruction in a legal commentary (*kitab*) or two. For the most part, however, in Banten and other parts of Java, "rural *kiais* [*shaykhs* who direct boarding schools] and *pesantrens* are a relatively recent phenomenon" (van Bruinessen 1995:174; Yakin 2016:232; cf. Soebardi 1971).

It is important to recall that, although madrasas had existed from a much earlier period in the Muslim Middle East, they became societally ascendant only after being drawn into the state-making efforts of Seljuk rulers under the leadership of the empire's grand vizier, Nizam al-Mulk (1018–1092). As Safi (2006:xvi)

and Kuru (2019a) have shown, the establishment and standardization of madrasa education were linked to the Seljuk rulers' efforts to create (in Safi's Althusserian phrasing) a "coercive ideological state apparatus" linking madrasas to land grants and state power, all in an effort to legitimate the Seljuks' assumption of power and their displacement of local Arab rulers. In the Indonesian archipelago, the establishment of schools for advanced Islamic learning had no direct counterpart to this empire-making assemblage.

When madrasa-like institutions did finally appear in the Indonesian archipelago, their founding had less to do with rulers' imperial projects than they did changes reorienting Muslims' relationship with state power, on one hand, and new currents of Islamic learning, on the other. The first development was the heightened incidence of pilgrim travel to the Middle East. Pilgrimage from Singapore and Malaya to Arabia was already on the rise in the early 1820s, and increased in Sumatra and Java shortly thereafter (Milner 1995:159). In 1850, Dutch officials reported that 48 people made the *hajj* from ethnic Javanese areas of Java. Only eight years later, the number had grown to 2,283. By 1911, the figure had blossomed to 7600 (now including travelers from Madura). A decade later the number averaged 8,000–15,000 per annum (Ricklefs 2012:14, 19).

The flow of pilgrims from other parts of Muslim Southeast Asia surged after the opening of the Suez canal in November 1869 (Milner 1995:159). Pilgrims from Singapore, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and southern Thailand traveled in such large numbers that, in 1885, the Dutch scholar and government officer, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, concluded that *Jawi* (the term given to all Southeast Asians in the Arab Muslim lands) comprised the single largest community in the holy city (Snouck Hurgronje 1931:215). In 1927, 64,000 pilgrims from the Dutch Indies and British Malaya made the *haj*, comprising a full 42% of the foreign total. The heightened flow also introduced *Jawi* Muslims to new Islamic print media. In 1884, the Ottoman rulers had established a government press in Mecca that published books in Arabic and in Malay, under the supervision of a respected Patani scholar, Ahmad. B. Muhammad Zayn al-Patani (van Bruinessen 1989:230; see also Feener 2007; Madmarn 1999:52–4). Along with the new models of religious education to which pilgrims were exposed, these publications had a transformative impact on Islamic knowledge and education back in the *Jawi* lands (see Dobbin 1983:161–92; Matheson and Hooker 1988; cf. Rock-Singer 2019).

The second development accelerating the spread of new forms of Islamic schooling had to do with the unrelenting advance of European colonialism into archipelago society. As in Java and Aceh, the European advance often came in the aftermath of bloody military campaigns and the overthrow or subjugation of Muslim rulers (Carey 2008:605–55; Laffan 2011; Ricklefs 2008:181–5). The Europeans' displacement of native rulers caused a crisis of legitimacy of such proportions that many in native society looked to socially ascendant ulama rather than indigenous rulers as exemplars of social well-being. In a similar manner, the networks created by boarding schools and Sufi orders provided much of the social

infrastructuring for the peasant rebellion that swept West Java in 1888, as well as for Acehnese resistance to the Dutch advance in the same period (Feener 2013; Kartodirdjo 1966).

These two developments, then, provided a political impetus for the establishment of a new network of Islamic boarding schools and, with it, a reconstruction of Muslim knowledge and ethics across the archipelago. Schools dedicated to Islamic law and sciences were established across large swaths of rural Java and Sumatra; several decades later they were being established in other areas of the archipelago. In Java and Madura (the portion of the archipelago from which we have the best statistical data), the total number of students in Islamic boarding schools grew from 94,000 in 1863 to 162,000 in 1872 and 272,000 in 1893 (Ricklefs 2012:15).

These new centers of Islamic learning eventually contributed to a third and no less consequential development: the appearance of Islamic social movements calling for the reform of the popular variants of Islamic observance for which native Muslims in the archipelago had long been renowned. Not all such reformists were legal-minded jurists opposed to Islamic mysticism; some were devotees of new Sufi orders (*tarekat*) promoting long-established varieties of *tasawwuf* mysticism while also emphasizing the importance of observing shariah law (see Alatas 2021). Among the most influential of these reform-minded Sufi orders were the Naqshabandiyya and the Qadiriyya wa Naqshabandiyya (Alatas 2021; Howell 2007). Both had established a foothold in Sumatra in the early 1800s and made their way to Java several decades later. As in South Asia and the Middle East, these reformed varieties of Sufism took exception to the antinomian tendencies of some earlier Sufi currents. Many "were also more anti-Christian and played a role in leading some anti-colonial uprisings" (Ricklefs 2012:15).

Bowen's observations with regard to new forms of Islam in the Gayo highlands of Aceh in the early twentieth century aptly illustrate the priorities of this new economy of Islamic knowledge. Prior to this time, healers, agricultural ritual specialists, and other adepts of esoteric knowledge invoked narratives that authorized a diverse and nonstandardized array of Islamic registers (Bowen 1993:11; cf. Laderman 1991; Peletz 1996). With the rise of the new culture of Islamic schooling, however, these local ritual experts found themselves challenged by reform-minded teachers trained in Islamic schools and prioritizing not equal access to divine powers but "the importance of conforming to scripture-based norms" (Bowen 1993:12).

Rather than doing away with differences of Islamic learning and practice, however, the new Muslim educational movements heightened competition among those regarded as *santri*, which is to say Muslims committed to the new, school-based varieties of Islamic learning. The first years of the twentieth century witnessed heightened competition between the proponents of two varieties of Muslim ethics and education. The rivalry pitted what in Indonesia are known as "Old Group" (*Kaum Tua*) traditionalists based in madrasa-like boarding schools against "New Group" (*Kaum Muda*) modernists intent on building Islamic schools that carried over Western-influenced general education into Islamic schooling (see Abdullah

1971; Lukens-Bull 2005:14). The contest was to create a legacy that has endured to this day. Remarkably, however, the rivalry did not weaken Muslim ways of learning and organizing but steadily enhanced their epistemological and societal dynamism.

The Abode Divided but Strong

The competition between New Group and Old Group Muslims was an Indonesian variation on a contest over Islamic knowledge and authority that raged across broad expanses of the Muslim-majority world from the late nineteenth century onwards (Roff 1967, 1970). The rivalry pitted the proponents of a more or less classically based and madrasa-derived model of jurisprudentially oriented learning against purifying reformers calling for a return to scripture but, with it, a far-reaching expansion of Muslim modes of knowledge.

The rivalry was not a purely intellectual matter. It had to do with two different ways of knowing and prioritizing what was required to live as Muslims in the face of massive social and political change. The latter developments included urban growth, colonial capitalism, new educational and print-media technologies, and above all else, the unrelenting advance of Western imperial rule. In the first years of the twentieth century, New Group reformists were primarily concentrated in the archipelago's newly developing urban centers, including Singapore, Penang, Batavia, and large towns in West Sumatra and central Java (see Peacock 1978; Roff 1970). The class base of New Group reformists lay in the new merchant strata that had grown up within the emerging colonial economy. By contrast, most Old Group traditionalists lived in the countryside, in territories not yet fully incorporated into the multiethnic macrocosm taking shape at the interstices of the colonial economy. From their urban bases, New Group Muslims rallied to what they regarded as a more universal profession of Islam, one relatively "detached from any particular place" (Bowen 1993:33) and less exclusively linked to ethnically and regionally defined religious authorities. By contrast, from their rural strongholds, Old Group traditionalists insisted that the profession of Islam was part of an entire way of life. At its heart lay the bonds of student disciples to religious masters, a relationship "modeled on the paradigmatic relationship between the Prophet Muhammad and his companions" (Alatas 2021:139).

Modern ideas of Islamic reform had become popular among Southeast Asians studying in Mecca in the 1880s and 1890s and in Cairo a few years later (Laffan 2003; Roff 1970). However, it was not until the 1910s that the *Jawi* community's debate over reformist ideas assumed the polarized form that it was to have from the mid-twentieth century onward. Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century the traditionalists' boarding schools enjoyed a monopoly on advanced Islamic education, from the 1910s onward the modernists challenged that dominance by introducing a new type of religious school. They referred to the institution with the Arabic word, "*madrasa*," or simply as an "Islamic school" (*sekolah Islam*). In Muslim Southeast Asia, the madrasa and Islamic school differed from their

pesantren rival in that they devoted the greater proportion of their curricula to general education rather than the Islamic sciences. New Group schools also replaced the learning circles (*halaqah*) common in *pesantren*, with their students huddled on the floor around a religious master, with well-kept classrooms equipped with blackboards, desks, and chairs. Classes were age-graded and regulated through standardized testing. *Madrasas* and Islamic schools also led the way in introducing textbooks printed in Roman letters, rather than the modified Arabic script known locally as *jawi*. Not long after they appeared on the Southeast Asian scene in the early 1900s, the schools also came to pioneer scout clubs, student newspapers, athletic sports, and, most important of all, girls' education.

An early exemplar of these modernist educational reforms was that pioneered by Abdullah Ahmad (1878–1933), one of West Sumatra's most prominent Muslim modernists, and the founder of the Adabiyah School in Padang, West Sumatra (est. 1909; see Yunus 1979). Displaying the attentiveness to new print media so typical of his modernist peers, Ahmad also published *al-Munir* (1911–16) – the first journal on Islamic reform in Indonesia. Both initiatives were undertaken so as to disseminate ideas of Islamic reform in West Sumatra. Tellingly, Ahmad's school was modeled not on the classical Middle Eastern madrasa but on the Dutch general school into which Islamic subjects were then added (Noer 1973:51–2). This remained the pattern for later schools, including the Diniyah School in Padang Panjang, built by Zainuddin Labai al-Yunusi (1890–1924) in 1915, and Mahmud Yunus's (1899–1982) Diniyah School in Batusangkar, founded in 1918. Unlike their *pondok pesantren* rivals, both the Abadiyah and Diniyah schools accepted small numbers of female students; the innovation soon spread to other modernist schools in the Sumatra region (Noer 1973:52; Srimulyani 2012; van Doorn-Harder 2006).

Other West Sumatran schools, such as the famous Sumatra Thawalib, opted to create programs that blended modernist and traditionalist educational styles. They preserved curricular elements from West Sumatra's traditionalist schools, known as *surau*, while also adopting the modernists' classrooms, blackboards, graded classes, and general educational subjects (Azra 2003; Yunus 1979:73). The Thawalib grew out of a student discussion group at the Surau Jembatan Besi under the direction of the famous Haji Rasul, also known as Abdul Karim Amrullah (1879–1945). The members of this group eventually joined with other Muslim educators to form the Sumatra Thawalib educational federation. The organization championed both educational reform and anti-colonial activism (Abdullah 1971:36). Remarkably, some among these Muslim educator-activists went on in the 1920s to form local chapters of the PKI, although not long thereafter local Muslim leaders declared communism incompatible with Islam (Lin 2018). Some schools also took the bold step of welcoming female students. In 1923, a female graduate of the Diniyah School, Rahmah el Yunusiah, went one step further and opened the first madrasa exclusively for girls, the Diniyah Putri in Padang Panjang, West Sumatra (Abdullah 1971:55). Its curriculum included Islamic and general studies. Still celebrated today, and as

I was told in a visit to the school in January 2006, its outspoken founder "believed that a woman should be able to become a president, minister or writer, or engage in any other profession that suited her capabilities" (Srimulyani 2012:38).

Home at this time to half of Indonesia's Muslims, Java was the second region in the archipelago where New Group Muslims pioneered new varieties of Islamic schooling. The effort was spearheaded by the Muhammadiyah, the modernist Islamic organization founded in Yogyakarta in 1912 (see Chapter 2; Nakamura 2012; Nashir 2015; Peacock 1978). The Muhammadiyah's founder was a local businessman and court-linked scholar, Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (1869–1923). Dahlan had spent two periods of study in Mecca, where he was exposed to Cairene ideals of religious and political renewal. Known for his gentle manners as well as his commitment to nonviolent nationalist struggle (Mulkhan 2010), Dahlan eschewed mass-based mobilization in favor of a message that stressed the self-sufficiency of scripture, the moral and intellectual responsibility of individual believers, and the need to integrate Islamic learning with modern sciences of the world (Alfian 1989:136–51; Noer 1973:86). Whereas reformist educational initiatives of a similar nature were promoted by state officials in Egypt, Iran, and the Ottoman heartland, the initiative in the archipelago was based squarely in Muslim civil society.

Much like West Sumatra's reformists, Dahlan also believed that education was vital if Muslims were to achieve the twin goals of religious renewal and modernist social progress (*kemajuan*). Consistent with these latter ambitions, the schools that Dahlan founded carried over but also revised elements of the curricula used in the "people's schools" introduced by the Dutch, as well as curricular streams from the Christian mission schools operating in central Java since the late nineteenth century. From 1917 onward, many Muhammadiyah schools were coeducational, usually with male and female students seated in different areas of the classroom, separated by a curtain. A separate Muhammadiyah women's wing, known as Aisyiyah, was established in 1917, with the express aim "that instead of just staying in the domestic arena, women should be given the opportunity to contribute to society" (Nashir 2015:22). In addition to supporting girls' admission to Muhammadiyah schools, Aisyiyah activists organized Islamic study circles, literacy programs, and health clinics (Doorn-Harder 2006; It 2005). From the mid-1920s on, Muhammadiyah schools spread rapidly across Indonesia with some 316 operating in Java and Madura by 1932 (Alfian 1989:189).

These modernist programs for educational reform soon caught the attention of Muslim scholars in traditionalist *pesantren*s (Srimulyani 2012:18). While maintaining their core commitment to jurisprudence and the Islamic sciences, in the 1920s several Javanese *pesantrens* experimented with incorporating general-educational subjects into their curricula. In the early 1930s several *pesantrens* went further, establishing madrasa-day schools with general educational curricula within the larger *pesantren* complex. The arrangement allowed *santri* students to devote part of their day to general studies while still leaving the greater portion of the day

for the Islamic sciences. But initiatives of this sort had an infrastructural limit: at this point in time, few teachers in traditionalist schools had sufficient training in general educational subjects to provide in-depth instruction.

In the 1930s, these early efforts at *pesantren* educational reform gained additional momentum, as more institutions developed six-year madrasa programs alongside their instruction in the Islamic sciences. The most common subjects featured in the new curriculum included history, geography, and mathematics (Dhofier 1992:104). At the celebrated Pesantren Tebuireng in Jombang, East Java, reforms like these were expanded under Hasyim Asy'ari's son, Wahid Hasyim (1914–53, Dhofier 1999:84–6), father to Abdurrahman Wahid, president of Indonesia from 1999 to 2001 (Barton 2002). Soon similar initiatives were underway at Java's other leading *pesantrens*. Among the most influential were those undertaken at the Pesantren Krapyak in Yogyakarta under Kyai Ali Maksum (1915–89), and Pesantren Tambak Beras and Rejoso in Jombang, East Java, under the direction of Kyai Hasbullah and Kyai Tamim respectively (Yunus 1979:246–8).

With these and other reforms to their curriculum, the educational horizons of *pesantren* education began to broaden as well in a manner showing the cross-fertilizing impact of traditionalist educators' dialogue with modernist teachers. As Dhofier (1999:95) has observed, a growing number of *pesantrens* were no longer just concerned with training full-time religious scholars. They instead sought to create Muslims capable of carrying Islamic piety and learning into the practice of science, the professions, and national politics.

There was another, equally iconic index of the far-reaching changes taking place in traditionalist Muslim education during these years. The sacred texts long at the heart of Southeast Asia's *pesantren* boarding schools are collectively known as the "yellow books" (*kitab kuning*) because of the color of the paper on which they were printed in the late nineteenth century. Most *kitabs* are commentaries (Ind., *syarah*; Ar., *sharh*) in the local dialect and/or Arabic discussing an older text which is itself a commentary or gloss on some earlier Arabic text. For many years, scholars of Indonesian Islam, including Clifford Geertz, had assumed that the *kitab* curriculum in late twentieth century boarding schools in the archipelago had remained unchanged since the nineteenth century. However, two studies of the *kitab kuning*, the first published in 1886 by the Dutch colonial scholar, L.W.C. van den Berg, and the second, published in 1989 by the anthropologist Martin van Bruinessen, today allow us to appreciate just how much the content of the curriculum in traditionalist boarding schools had changed. It had changed in a manner that facilitated a remarkable broadening of curricular and epistemological horizons (van den Berg 1886:519–55; van Bruinessen 1989:226–69).

Van den Berg's research revealed that, although commentaries drawing on the Qur'an and hadith were widely used in Java's boarding schools, full hadith collections were rare and thus not yet the focus of study. The absence is surprising because, as noted earlier, in the Middle East hadith study has long been part of the core curriculum in institutions of higher religious learning because familiarity

with hadith collections is deemed essential for advanced learning in Islamic jurisprudence. Equally surprising, in van den Berg's era there was only one *kitab* in the boarding school curriculum dedicated to Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*). A century later, based on exhaustive travel to schools across Indonesia and the collection of 900 textbooks, van Bruinessen (1989:229) discovered just how much the boarding school curriculum had changed:

> [A] significant change has taken place in the past century. There are no less than ten different Qur'anic commentaries (in Arabic, Malay, Javanese, and Indonesian) in the collection, besides straightforward translations (also called *tafsir*) into Javanese and Sundanese. The number of *hadith* compilations is even more striking. There is almost no *pesantren* now where *hadith* is not taught as a separate subject. The main emphasis in instruction remains, however, on *fiqh*, the Islamic science par excellence. There have been no remarkable changes in the *fiqh* texts studied, but the discipline of *usul al-fiqh* (the foundations or bases of *fiqh*) has been added to the curriculum of many *pesantren*, thereby allowing a more flexible and dynamic view of *fiqh*.

All this is to say, then, that in just one century the study of *kitab* in Indonesian boarding schools had been reconfigured so as to ground educational epistemologies in three subjects that together facilitate a significant broadening of intellectual horizons: Qur'anic interpretation, the study of the Traditions of the Prophet (*hadith*), and *fiqh* learning made more responsive to contemporary needs by including instruction in the principles of jurisprudence. These changes offer vivid proof that, contrary to critics' stereotypes, traditionalist education in modern Indonesia was anything but static.

With regard to one matter, however – the education of girls and young women – traditionalist schools continued to lag behind their New Group counterparts. As in the Middle East and North Africa (Bano 2017), some elite Muslim families had long provided private tutors for their daughters. But for many traditionalist male scholars the enrollment of females in Islamic schools was regarded as a slippery slope toward sexual impropriety. Here again, however, the steady advance of modernist educational institutions eventually prompted some Old Group educators to rethink their priorities. The first steps toward enrolling girls and young women in formal Islamic education in traditionalist schools were taken in the late 1920s, almost two decades after modernist schools had accepted their first female students (Dhofier 1999; Srimulyani 2012). In 1934, however, the national congress of Nahdlatul Ulama approved a resolution recommending education for all girls and women (Ricklefs 2012:88). Notwithstanding the appeal, rates of education for Muslim women remained stubbornly low. On the eve of Indonesian independence, literacy rates in any script (Roman or Arabic) hovered between just 4% and 6% in most of Java. However, for women the figures were typically one-fifth to one-eighth of their male counterparts (Ricklefs 2012:25). The breakthrough to a more

far-reaching reform of women's education in general, and Islamic education in particular, had to await the monumental shifts in schooling that were to take place in the aftermath of Indonesia's declaration of independence in August 1945.

Nation-State and Educational Reform

The reforms to Islamic education initiated by Muslim educators in the first decades of the twentieth century accelerated in the years following Indonesia's declaration of independence, spurred in part in defensive reaction against the rapid expansion of the state educational sector. In the first years of the independence era, the republican government embarked on an ambitious program of school building, and a school diploma quickly became a passport toward employment in business and government. As more Muslim parents opted to place their children in state schools, the Muslim sector's share of total enrollments plummeted (Dhofier 1999:22). Importantly, however, traditionalist and modernist educators responded to the challenge not by hunkering down and clinging to received educational ways but by upgrading their general and vocational offerings, and building middle-schools and high-schools on their boarding school campuses. By the late 1950s, these reforms had begun to reverse enrollment declines (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:83; PPIM 2004:20).

With the heightened involvement of the state in Islamic education, however, there now was an additional tension to the politics of Islamic learning. Officials in the nationalist-dominated wing of the state administration argued that Islamic schools should be placed under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Culture, rather than the Ministry of Religion. Muslim leaders rejected these proposals, fearing that the (at that time) secularist-dominated Ministry of Education would act against Muslim educators' interests. The proposal was put on hold. Meanwhile the Ministry of Religion received approval to provide subsidies to select Islamic schools, although in amounts smaller than that the Ministry of Education provided general schools. Under the terms of the Law on Education (*Undang Undang Pokok Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*) No. 4, 1950, the state also recognized the degrees granted by madrasas, but it declined to make them equivalent to those received by students who graduated from general schools. As a result, few graduates of Islamic boarding schools were able to make the transition from Islamic schooling into any of the country's national colleges. A pattern of educational duality that seemed to have been diminishing in the late colonial period seemed to be worsening once more.

The effort to reform madrasas and *pesantrens* by linking them more directly to the national educational system took a new turn in the 1970s with the appointment of Dr. Mukti Ali (1923–2004) to the post of Minister of Religious Affairs (see Brankley Abbas 2021:53). Ali was a graduate of McGill University in Canada and had worked as a professor at the State Islamic Institute in Yogyakarta. During his tenure as minister, he initiated a series of bold measures to integrate Islamic

institutions into the national education system. Although Islamist critics and even some Western scholars have portrayed Ali as a fellow traveler to Suhartoist developmentalism, the two occasions I interviewed him (1995 and 1997) convinced me that he was a subtle and independent thinker and one who was not hesitant to take polite exception to the excesses of Suharto governance. A key theme of both of the interviews I had with Dr. Ali centered on his conviction that the effort to link Islamic learning to the sciences of the world was not a departure from Islamic traditions but consistent with the best practices of Muslim learning and civilization in the Muslim Middle Period (tenth to fifteenth centuries; see Gutas 1998).

In 1975, the signing of the "Agreement of the Three Ministers" (*SKB Tiga Menteri*) by the Ministers of Religious Affairs, National Education, and Internal Affairs paved the way for making madrasa degrees educationally equivalent to those awarded by general schools. As a result of this reform, madrasa graduates were given the right to continue their studies in general institutions of higher education. Conversely, students from general schools were allowed to study at madrasas and Islamic institutions of higher learning.

The Three Ministers agreement made the extension of state equivalence contingent on Muslim schools' meeting new curricular standards. For degree-bearing graduates to qualify for these equivalences, they had to graduate from schools in which the curriculum had been revised to accommodate 70% general studies while retaining 30% in the Islamic religious sciences. The content of the religious portion of the curriculum in madrasas was also standardized into five subjects: Quran-Hadith studies, theology (*aqidah*) and ethics (*aqhlaq*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Islamic history, and Arabic language. Minister of Education Decree No. 21 Year 2016 offered an additional stipulation that the total period of study for each subject each week was two hours for a total of ten (Zuhdi 2018:5). This contrasts with the three hours of religious education today required of all students in general (nonreligious) schools. Students in general schools also follow a less rigorous version of the madrasa curriculum (Qur'an-Hadith, theology-ethics, etc.); however, they are not provided with instruction in Arabic.

Equally significant, to guarantee that their students were competitive for admission to institutions of higher learning, the Three Ministers agreement made clear madrasas were expected to use textbooks modeled on those used in general schools and prepared by the Ministry of Education and Culture. In announcing these measures, the government made clear that it was not trying to abolish centers of advanced instruction in the Islamic sciences. It allowed a small number of senior secondary schools, known simply as "special-program secondary madrasas" (*madrasa aliyah negeri-program khusus*) to continue to dedicate the greater portion of their curriculum to religious sciences. However, by requiring madrasas to apply for this status, the ministry signaled that it hoped that only a small number of institutions with high-quality religious instruction would apply for this special status.

In 1989, the government enacted a new and more ambitious law on National Education System (UUSPN). For this first time in Indonesian educational history,

this law referred to madrasas and Islamic schools generally as a subsystem within the larger national educational system. One consequence of this reform was that madrasas and *pesantrens* were also required to participate in the government's effort to make education compulsory for nine years. The law also tightened the regulations (first enacted in the late 1960s) stipulating that religious instruction is compulsory at all class levels in public schools. The most dramatic consequence of the 1989 regulation, however, was to redefine the madrasa as a general school with an Islamic identity. Having been redefined in this manner, the madrasa curriculum was also expected to conform even more fully to educational standards set by the Ministry of Education. At the same time, however, the MORA was authorized to develop curricular materials that conveyed an "Islamic perspective" even as they aligned with Education Ministry guidelines. To assist in the development of these materials, the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) expanded its curricular offerings to include teaching in the social and natural sciences.

My interviews with senior *pesantren* and madrasa teachers over a twenty-year period confirmed that these integrative reforms were *not* seen by the majority of Muslim educators as a heavy-handed effort by the state to "secularize" or otherwise subordinate the Islamic schooling sector. On the contrary, most educators – including those associated with the Jemaah-Islamiyah linked *pesantren* al-Mukmin outside of Surakarta, Central Java (see Chapter 4 and the subsequent section) – told me that they welcomed these reforms.

Several factors help to explain Muslim educators' openness to reform, an attitude which contrasts with that displayed by Muslim educators in some Muslim-majority countries (Riaz 2008:190–223; Zaman 2002). In Indonesia, the efforts were eased by the fact that, as discussed earlier, modernist Muslims had pioneered curricular reforms since the first decades of the twentieth century, and the reforms had eventually been accepted even by traditionalist educators. In some ninety interviews I conducted in 2005, 2006, 2012, and 2015, Muslim school directors recalled that they also welcomed the 1975 and 1989 agreements because the reforms spoke to one of the educators' long-cherished dreams: that graduates of Islamic schools should have equal opportunities for admission to all state colleges and universities. Another finding from these interviews was that the educators acknowledged that the reforms had altered their understanding of their schools' educational mission. The mission was no longer to train scholars for a life of learning in the advanced Islamic sciences. It was instead to instill piety in students, most of whom, it was assumed, were eventually to work in the general labor market. As a teacher at a *pesantren* in Jombang put it in December 2006,

> The new policy was good, because it provided Muslims with access to new jobs, and it brought pious Muslims into businesses and professions where they have long been absent. Islam is no longer supposed to be just something for legal experts and religious scholars.

The Transformative Role of Muslim Higher Education

As these last examples show, a primary driver for the reform of Islamic education in Indonesia has been that over the course of the twentieth century both madrasas and *pesantrens* developed collaborative ties with state-supported institutions of Islamic higher education. These linkages paved the way for what was to become an integrated national educational system with program equivalences and student mobility across the Islamic and general educational divide. The synergies also created momentum in state and society for the creation and refinement of an Islamic higher educational sector.

The first efforts to establish a system of Islamic higher education in Indonesia had gotten underway in the final years of the colonial period, when Muslim leaders in Jakarta and West Sumatra met to discuss establishing several small institutes of higher learning. Both initiatives stalled, but they created a precedent for future initiatives. A more ambitious effort to establish an Islamic university began in the weeks prior to the declaration of Indonesian independence in August 1945. The effort culminated in the establishment in April 1946 of Indonesia's first ever Islamic university, the *Sekolah Tinggi Islam* (STI, Islamic School of Higher Learning) in Yogyakarta. The STI was renamed the Universitas Islam Indonesia in March 1948 and remains a large and well-respected Islamic university to this day.

One of the most prominent supporters of the STI initiative was Mohammad Hatta, an observant Muslim, social democrat, and first vice president of Indonesia (Chapter 3). Hatta called for the new Islamic university to adopt an "inclusive" attitude toward Islamic education. For Hatta, inclusivity meant that the school should draw on philosophy, history, the natural sciences, and sociology to deepen Muslims' understanding of their religion and history. Hatta decried what he called the "narrow" views of certain traditional Muslims and took a swipe at exclusivist Islamists when he insisted that if religious law was to be made meaningful it had to be understood in a contextual and "empirical" manner (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:6–8). Hatta's comments illustrate that the ideas of epistemological cross-fertilization – carrying over insights from the sciences of the world into the study of the Islamic sciences (and vice versa) – built on long-standing precedents within Indonesia's Muslim community and were not the creation of top-down engineering by New Order authorities in the 1980s and 1990s.

Notwithstanding the hopes of Muslim leaders, state funding to Islamic higher education during the first years of independence remained stubbornly low, in large part because the national economy remained stagnant. Nonetheless, in 1960 the government authorized the establishment of a nationwide system of State Islamic Institutes (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri*, IAIN). The first institute was created by merging two existing faculties in Jakarta and Yogyakarta. Over the next ten years, Muslim leaders and government officials in population centers across the country established a number of similarly organized but smaller faculties. Most were woefully underfunded, and their faculty were obliged to work multiple jobs to make

ends meet. By 1973, there were some 112 IAIN campuses, most of which consisted of a single simple building offering courses by part-time staff (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:17).

Under the leadership of Minister Ali, in 1975 the Ministry of Religion undertook an ambitious reorganization of the IAIN system. The Ministry began by reducing the number of IAIN from 113 to 13. More controversially in the eyes of Islamist critics, the Ministry also initiated a program of faculty enhancement that sent senior officials from the IAIN and the Ministry of Religion to universities in Canada, the United States, and Western Europe. The core program was anchored on a special relationship developed between the IAIN and the program in Islamic studies at McGill University in Canada, where Minister Ali had been a graduate student in the 1960s (Brankley Abbas 2021; Lukens-Bull 2013:45–9). By 2001, ninety-nine IAIN instructors had studied at McGill; twelve had received their Ph.D. (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:26). Upon returning to Indonesia, these Canadian-educated scholars were appointed to strategic administrative positions in the educational wing of the MORA.

At the center of these state's reforms to Islamic higher education were curricular reforms similar to those which the government had implemented with *pesantrens* and madrasas. The MORA sought to open the teaching of the classical Islamic sciences to empirical methods and epistemologies, drawing the sciences of revelation into dialogue with the sciences of the world. Today, every student admitted to the state Islamic university system fulfills divisional studies requirements that begin with courses on Islamic history and contextualizing methodologies for the study of Islamic history, ethics, and culture. Unlike the instruction students receive in some *pesantrens*, the IAIN curriculum is not limited to any single Islamic legal school (*madhhab*). Equally important, since 2003, students in the IAIN system take a basic course on democracy, civil society, and human rights, including women's rights. Although it has been updated and changed over the years, the curriculum for the latter program was initially developed from 1999 to 2002 in collaboration with the Jakarta office of the Asia Foundation but under the authority of Islamic educators.

Today there are fourteen IAINs across Indonesia. In addition, there are nine full-fledged National Islamic Universities (UIN or *Universitas Islam Negeri*), which are intended to serve as research universities. There are also thirty-four second-tier state-Islamic colleges, known by their acronym STAIN (*Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri*; State-Islamic Higher School). These have a smaller number of departments, fewer faculties, and a less extensively "upgraded" teaching staff. The conversion of IAIN Jakarta into UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta was undertaken in 2002 and was then followed by the upgrading to university status of the IAIN Yogyakarta, STAIN Malang, and IAIN Pekanbaru in 2004 (Abdullah 2017; Lukens-Bull 2005). With the creation of the UINs, Islamic universities now have faculties not only in Islamic sciences but in disciplines as varied as economics, psychology, sociology, and medicine (Yatim and Nasuhi 2002).

Through these and other measures, the IAIN and the UIN today act as cultural brokers between a modernized and pluralistic educational system and Indonesia's 66,000 Islamic schools. The directors of the state Islamic universities feel confident that they can play this role because the UIN/AIN system remains the preferred avenue of higher education for graduates of madrasas and *pesantrens*. Moreover, because of similarities between the IAIN curriculum and *pesantrens*, many graduates of *pesantrens* find it easier to gain admission to the IAIN than to the state-run general university system. *Pesantren* graduates also excel on the IAIN entrance exam because of their greater fluency in Arabic and greater familiarity with the Islamic sciences.

Is the impact of this shift likely to be as profound as many of the leading administrators in the IAIN system and the Ministry of Religion hope? The editors of a 2002 report on the "IAIN and the modernization of Islam in Indonesia" were confident about the civic-pluralist influence of these higher educational reforms:

> The large number of IAIN alumni who go on to become *kyai* or religious teachers in *pesantren* certainly gives rise to the hope that they will bring with them a new Islamic culture that is modern, contextual, liberal, and rational, like that which is being developed in the IAIN. . . . With the model of understanding developed at the IAIN, Muslim Indonesians, who of course represent the majority of Indonesians, will be educated so as to be able to understand the important meaning of modernity, progress, . . . societal pluralism, and tolerance toward people who profess other religions.
>
> *(Jabali and Jamhari 2002:114)*

The long-term impact of IAIN programs on the broader Islamic educational system, however, remains considerably less certain than this upbeat conclusion suggests. The authors of the above book themselves note that "the local interpretation" of IAIN programs varies from region to region. Some – albeit in my experience, a minority – of boarding school educators in such strongholds of traditionalist Islam as East Java and South Kalimantan tend to view suspiciously the IAIN's emphasis on contextual approaches to Islamic knowledge. More significantly, exclusivist Islamists affiliated with groups like the FPI and the MMI have denounced the new UIN/IAIN intellectual ecumenicism as "Western" and "secular." A book published in March 2005, *Ada Pemurtadan di IAIN* [There's apostasy in the IAIN], is but one of many publications that have alleged that the IAIN is deviating from authentic traditions of Islamic learning (Jaiz 2005).

So far these criticisms appear to have had little impact on the State Islamic University mission or on its curriculum. Parents and students at Islamic madrasas and colleges have responded enthusiastically to the expansion of the educational curriculum, recognizing its benefits for vocational training and employment. Although viewed with ambivalence by some in the non-Muslim community, the extension of religious education into public schools has further diminished the

educational dualism that once characterized the system as a whole, facilitating heightened movement of Muslim youth into the professions.

The Salaf Revival

Not all Islamic *pesantrens* went along with the 1975 memorandum's recommended reforms. Some schools, like the celebrated modernist *pesantren* at Gontor in Ponorogo, East Java, insisted on maintaining their existing curriculum. Gontor's curriculum blends the study of classical and modern religious texts with general education and intensive study of Arabic and English. School officials at Gontor and like-minded schools were keenly aware, however, of their graduates' interest in access to higher education. Behind the scenes and in good Indonesian fashion, then, the officials made private arrangements with state Islamic universities so that graduates from their institutions were allowed to sit for entrance examinations.

A smaller number of traditionalist *pesantrens* opted to decline the terms of the 1975 memorandum entirely. Most did so because their directors were not interested in incorporating any general subject matter into their curricula. As with the famous Pesantren Lirboyo in Kediri, Java (which I visited in January 2008), these schools make clear that they prefer to remain true to their founding mission, which is to provide advanced training in Arabic and Islamic sciences. School officials with whom I spoke at institutions like these emphasized that they were not at all opposed to the Three-Ministers Agreement but simply believed that there was still a need for *pesantrens* dedicated to advanced instruction in Arabic and the Islamic sciences.

The Three-Ministers Agreement had never intended to abolish religion-only *pesantrens* like Lirboyo or independent madrasas with a higher proportion of religion than general classes. The memorandum stipulated that a small number of senior secondary madrasas, as well as any *pesantren* that so desired, could continue to dedicate the core of their curriculum to religious studies. Government officials nonetheless hoped to reduce the number of madrasas with more than 50% religious instruction by requiring that institutions apply for this status as "special" schools (madrasa *khusus*). In a manner typical of ministry dealings with Muslim educators in the 1970s, the enforcement provisions for this policy were light-handed; the only sanction against schools declining to register was that they would not qualify for the small subsidy offered to participating madrasas (see Effendy 1995).

The government's interactions with *pesantren* leaders were similarly accommodating. In the mid-1970s, there were still *pesantrens* like Lirboyo which provided little or no instruction in nonreligious subjects. Known as *pesantren salaf* (religion-only boarding schools; as opposed to *pesantren khalaf* or mixed-curriculum *pesantren*; see Dhofier 1999:22; Lukens-Bull 2005:67), these schools attract students primarily from traditionalist backgrounds who hope to pursue private, nongovernmental careers in such religious fields as preaching, teaching, or Islamic jurisprudence. Officials from the two ministries responsible for coordinating state

educational programs, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religion, recognize that, in offering advanced training in the Islamic sciences, *pesantren salaf* provide an important service to the Muslim community. The ministries thus have agreed not to interfere in *pesantren salaf* affairs, allowing the educational market to decide these schools' future.

As my interviews with Ministry of Religion officials in December 2005 and January 2015 indicated, however, in the late-1970s government officials were at first convinced that, left to themselves, *pesantren salaf* would decline in popularity to the point that, like Christian seminaries in the West, eventually only the few dozens required to train advanced scholars would survive. Western scholars assessing *pesantrens* in these years shared this modernizing confidence, believing *pesantren salaf* enrollments were likely to plummet as students opted for schools with a greater mix of general and vocational instruction (see Dhofier 1999:22; Lukens-Bull 2005:65–6). Government statistics from these years at first seemed to confirm that young people were choosing general schools over Islamic educational institutions, and, where they opted for an Islamic school, they picked mixed-curricula madrasas over religion-only *pesantrens*.

Ministry officials shared this confidence that employment realities would hasten the decline of *salaf* or religion-only *pesantrens*. Students hoping to work in the government's religious bureaucracy or to teach Islam in state or private schools (where all Muslim students are required to receive three hours of religious instruction each week) recognized that the surest pathway into employment was through one of Indonesia's IAINs, STAIN, or private Islamic universities that met state standards. The expansion of state and private Islamic colleges offering general educational degrees was one of the most significant changes in Indonesian higher education during the 1980s and 1990s (Yatim and Nasuhi 2002:295–329).

Muslim senior educators with whom I spoke during visits to schools in 2005–6 and 2012–15 observed early on that enrollments in *pesantren salaf* did decline, just as government officials had predicted. However, to the surprise of many officials, the trend was reversed in the 1990s, as Indonesia's Islamic resurgence gained momentum. By the mid-1990s, large *pesantrens* that had earlier accommodated general education, like the Pesantren Tebuireng in Jombang, reopened special programs for students who wished to pursue religion-only (*salaf*) programs of study. Although precise statistics are lacking, Islamic teachers in East Java today report that dozens of small *pesantren salaf* have been founded since the 1990s, creating a veritable *salaf* revival.

This growing interest in *salaf* education is not a sign of anti-modern conservatism or, least of all, a "conservative turn" in the repressively transformationalist sense of those terms. Studies of *salaf* schools and my own visits over the years confirm the views of Jakartan-based educators: that, in matters of pedagogical technique, the larger *pesantren salaf* are not at all close-minded or anti-modern. Most make ready use of computers, video DVDs for language study, and, under

strict supervision, the internet (see also Lukens-Bull 2005:65–8). Students who enter *salaf* programs typically come not from exclusivist Islamist households but from traditionalist and modernist families interested in achieving mastery in the Islamic sciences. Like their counterparts at the *pesantren khalaf*, many are reticent on matters of gender equality and Islamic law (see Chapter 6), but they do not otherwise conform to a "conservative turn" profile.

Rather than reflecting a backward-looking turn in Islamic education, then, the revival of *salaf* education reflects two cultural developments specific to the religious marketplace. The first is the growth in piety among the Muslim public as a whole. Among its myriad social effects, the resurgence has given rise to a pronounced expansion of interest in classical and modern Muslim scholarship. One ancillary expression of this interest is seen in Indonesia's booming market in Islamic publishing, one segment of which has made classical works of Islamic scholarship broadly available in Indonesian translation (Watson 2005). The second and equally important influence on the *salaf* revival has been the availability of new employment opportunities for graduates trained in the classical Islamic sciences, especially those with a gift for preaching. Vice Rector Mansur Zawawi of the Hasyim Asy'ari Islamic Institute in Jombang, East Java summarized the latter matter clearly:

> Contrary to what we saw fifteen years ago, today there are abundant opportunities for *salaf* graduates to go into private enterprise, working as preachers. A gifted preacher fluent in Arabic and knowledgeable in religion can earn more in one night than an Islamic judge or teacher gets in a month![1]

The growing interest in Islamic education during the 1980s and 1990s was reflected in educational statistics. Between 1977 and 1997, the number of *pesantrens* more than doubled, rising from 4195 to 9388; today the figures stands at 16,000. Over the same period, the number of *santri* students increased from 677,000 to 1,770,760; by 2002, the figure had grown to just under three million (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:68). A similar expansionist trend has been seen in madrasas, where, as noted earlier, some 5.698 million primary and secondary school age students are educated (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007:177–80). All this is to say that, contrary to some forecasts, Islamic education in modern Indonesia has not collapsed in the face of a modernizing juggernaut; it has flourished.

Schooling as Social Movement

As this brief history shows, Indonesia's Muslim educators have not at all steered clear of new educational trends. Although some schools remain aloof, the main currents in Islamic education have responded to the desires of students, parents, and educational reformists by adding general and vocational programs to their curricula. Although market demand explains some of the Islamic sector's dynamism, it is clear

that the religious-educational marketplace is embedded in a larger world subject to understandings and disciplines more varied than price signals among autonomous individuals (Chapter 1). Indeed, and to digress for a moment into a topic debated by economic theorists, one of the most striking features of religious education is that, rather than just satisfying preexisting "consumer preferences," religious schools help to constitute the very preferences and subjective demand to which they respond. All this is to say that the goal of Islamic education is not merely a matter of self-made, individual preferences. Among the pious, education is seen as part of a collective duty to enhance Islamic observance in society, turning believers away from things un-Islamic and toward those commanded by God (Moosa 2014).

Viewed from this broader, contextual perspective, Indonesia's Islamic schools bear an at least partial resemblance to the social movements to which political theorists turned their attention a generation ago. In the political scientist Sidney Tarrow's oft-cited phrase, social movements are "collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities," and seeking a fundamental change in existing institutions and hierarchies (Tarrow 1998:4). Much social movement literature implies that the state is the primary target of movement-leveraged change. However, there is no reason to assume that all social movements are state-oriented in this way. As with movements in other religious traditions, Islamic social movements tend to be as much concerned with changing subjectivities and society as they are challenging the state (cf. on Pentecostal Christians, Freston 2001; Hefner 2013; Robbins 2004).

The parallel between social movements and Islamic schooling is even more striking when one looks at the way in which religious schools create cultural frames for perceiving and reforming the social order. Here again a brief theoretical aside is in order. In political sociology and political science, social movement theory arose in reaction to "strain" and "grievance" explanations of protest movements in political sociology that assumed that the mere presence of injustices in society was sufficient to generate protest movements (see Wiktorowicz 2004:8; Wickham 2002:6–8). Strain theorists also seemed to imply that the actors who join social movements are more stressed out than rational, seeking compensatory release rather than a clear-headed pathway toward change.

Social movement theorists responded to strain theory's presuppositions by pointing out that injustice and grievances abound in all societies, but they do not everywhere give rise to organized social protest. The creation of the latter depends on processes far less automatic than strain theories had implied. In particular, theorists argued, the emergence of social movements depends on three conditions: the existence of social networks through which actors can communicate and organize; opportunity structures in political society that provide openings through which the mobilization can move without incurring repression; and, last but not least, leaders capable of formulating "cultural frames" that resonate with popular aspirations, inspiring people to join the social movements (Wiktorowicz 2004:8; Wickham 2002:6–8).

The analogy between social movements and Islamic schools begins to wear thin once one recalls that historically many religious schools were founded for reasons that had little to do with creating a unified movement. In Indonesia as in many other parts of the Muslim world, traditionalist educators are well known for the way they jealously guard their institutional autonomy. This is not an attitude that lends itself to the cohesive leadership and collective goals highlighted in social movement theory. By comparison with social movements, too, the ends to which Islamic education are put are highly varied. To state the point in theoretical terms, education's impact on actors' habits and ideals is behaviorally diffuse rather than instrumentalized toward the efficient achievement of a specific political end.

Notwithstanding these differences, Islamic schooling creates network resources ("social capital") with an at least latent potential to draw social actors into organizations and projects that carry over values and social ties far beyond the educational sphere. It is well known, for example, that *pesantren* education creates a bond between student and teacher that tends to be infused with a deep sense of gratitude and loyalty. The bond in turn gives rise to enduring solidarities that can be deployed for ends other than those of education or piety (Dhofier 1999:34–40). Whether in the ulama-led peasant rebellion in late nineteenth-century Banten or the phoenix-like resilience of the Nahdlatul Ulama in the late twentieth century, modern Indonesian history offers numerous examples of Muslim educational networks deployed to broader sociopolitical ends. Indeed, more generally, the twentieth-century political competition associated with what are known in Indonesian studies as *aliran politik* ("political streams") was in part the result of what one might describe as the "social movement-ization" of preexisting educational networks, both Muslim and secular nationalist (see Geertz 1965:127–8; Sidel 2006:36–41).

The most striking parallel between Islamic schooling and social movements, however, has to do with the "framing processes" in which both engage (Snow et al. 1986; Snow 2004). To create an effective movement, social movement theorists point out, the cultural frames created by leaders must (1) diagnose some chronic problem in society in a manner that resonates with the hopes and needs of societal actors, (2) recommend a strategy or diagnosis for the problem's remedy, and then (3) provide a rationale that motivates actors to support the proposed course of remedial action. If any among these conditions is unmet, the movement will not gain traction. The most critical element in the framing process is the frame's ability to resonate with the perceptions and aspirations of broad masses of people in society. As Wiktorowicz has noted,

> Such reverberation . . . depends upon not only its consistency with cultural narratives, but also the reputation of the individual or group responsible for articulating the frame, the personal salience of the frame for potential participants, the consistency of the frame, and the frame's empirical credibility in real life.
>
> *(Wiktorowicz 2004:16; see also Benford and Snow 2000)*

Some proponents of Islamic schooling in Indonesia have long engaged in campaigns that bear an uncanny resemblance to the framing processes highlighted in social movement theory. For example, in Muslim educational circles in twentieth-century Indonesia, an oft-heard line was that the main cause of the country's colonization was the failure of ordinary Muslims to fulfill their religious duties as Muslims. The key to improving state and society, then, lay in Muslims learning to be religiously observant and abide by God's commands. On the question of the state, the message Muslim educators in Indonesia have conveyed has, to say the least, varied. With the partial exception of the tumultuous period from 1955 to 1965, when the country was torn by a bitter rivalry among communist, nationalist, and Islamic parties, the majority of educators have tended to downplay any desire to transform the state or engage in any other anti-system social project. Indeed, the educational mainstream has long shown a greater interest in subjective and societal edification than it has in structural struggles over the state. To put the matter differently, inasmuch as they have been concerned with political issues, Indonesia's Muslim educators have tended to be nationalist and system-reforming rather than radical and system-upending.

Since the early 1990s, however, a few school movements have arisen and offered frames proposing a more far-reaching transformation of politics and society. It is important to emphasize that, even among these schools, only a tiny number follow the example of figures like Abu Bakar Ba'asyir of the al-Mukmin *pesantren* outside of Solo, Central Java, who advocates what amounts to a revolutionary restructuring of state and society (see Chapter 4 and the subsequent section). Islamist revolution is not the preferred end of most of the new generation of social movement schools. The majority steer clear of political radicalism, subscribing to the notion that what is most needed is a gradualist and peaceful Islamization of state and society.

The most notable example of system-accommodating social movement schools of this latter sort is those associated with what has come to be known in recent years as the "integrated Islamic school" (*sekolah Islam terpadu*) movement (Hefner 2009:73–83). Integrated schools are part of a multistranded educational movement that, to the surprise of many, became one of the fastest growing trends in Islamic education in the 2000s. While educationally innovative in some regards, it was in this educational current more than any other that one saw evidence of a religiously exclusivist – but at the same time epistemologically innovative – turn.

The PKS and the Integrated School Movement

The first principle of integrated Islamic education is that, rather than confining religious edification to one or two curricular modules, it should be woven into all subjects across the entire school day. Although not all proponents of integrated Islamic schools are familiar with the broader history, many academically trained proponents of integrated education recognize that the approach had antecedents in the "Islamization of knowledge" programs developed by the U.S.-based Palestinian

academic, Isma'il Raji al Faruqi (1921–86; see al Faruqi 2021). In the 1970s and early 1980s, al-Faruqi and his colleagues formulated a thoughtful but stern critique of Western science and education, accusing both of materialist and secularist biases. Al-Faruqi's message was that, if Muslims are to use Western science or education at all, the content of both must be "Islamized" through their reconstruction in accordance with the core Islamic ideal of God's unity and oneness (*tawhid*; see Abaza 2002:77–87).

In today's Indonesia, the curricular implementation of the integrated education ideal usually proves to be somewhat less ambitious than one might expect on the basis of the theoretical statements of the global movement's founders. Charging significantly higher tuition than their public school and *pesantren* counterparts, the majority of integrated Islam schools cater to the Muslim upper-middle class, and they base most of their curriculum on modules prepared by the state Ministries of Education and Religion. They do so not because of government pressures but because school administrators understand that after graduation most of their students hope to go on to college, and college admission in Indonesia requires tested mastery of the national curriculum. Although an integrated curriculum borrows heavily from the national standard, the aspiration to integrate Islamic principles into the full curriculum does make a notable difference in both the style and substance of instruction. As one educator at an integrated-Islam school in Tangerang, West Java observed, "Even when we teach a course like mathematics, we try to refer to examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad, who was a trader, and whose trading activities can be used to illustrate mathematical concepts."[2]

In the two decades following the fall of the Suharto regime, hundreds of integrated Islamic schools sprang up, most of them in urban and suburban parts of the archipelago (Hefner 2009:74). The two fastest-growing networks were, and remain still today, those associated with two social movements of democratic Islamist persuasion, the PKS and the Hidayatullah movement. The PKS network is by far the larger of the two.

The PKS is a center-right party similar in organization and ambition to Turkey's Welfare Party and its successor, the AK (Justice and Development) party (Hamayotsu 2011; cf. White 2002). As noted in Chapter 4, the PKS was established three months after Suharto's resignation in May 1998 and went on to win 1.3% of the vote in the 1999 elections and an impressive 7.3% five years later. Most of the PKS leadership had a background in the democratic wing of the Islamist student movement of the 1980s and 1990s and were inspired in large part by the example of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (see Mitchell 1969). In the 1980s, Indonesian students returning from Egypt had brought back Brotherhood ideas on movement tactics and organization (Bubalo and Fealy 2005; Machmudi 2006, 2021). One of the main ideas they borrowed had to do with Islamic learning and citizenship and centered on the notion that the cultivation of ethical character is the most effective way to build a sustainable movement for societal change. The students also learned that the best way to carry out this character formation is through the organization

of small learning circles (*halaqah*) and support groups (*usroh*, literally "family"), where cadres study various aspects of Islamic tradition and, more generally, strive to implement God's law in all aspects of their life (see Chapter 4).

It is this mainline Islamist organization, then, from which the largest current in the integrated school movement emerged in the early 2000s. Each of the schools in this network is locally financed and formally independent from the national PKS leadership. However, as I learned in visits to two dozen schools between 2005 and 2016, most school principals are not shy about admitting their ties to the PKS. Schools vary, however, in the degree to which they encourage or require teaching staff to self-identify as PKS members. The directorship of most of the schools that I visited did not advertise their ties to the PKS, but parents and older students were well aware of the high regard in which school administrators held the party.

Interviewed in 2005 and 2006 and again in 2012 and 2016, a minority among the parents of student attending integrated Islam schools in Yogyakarta, Tasikmalaya, Makassar, and Jakarta, who were not themselves members of the PKS, applauded the high quality of education their children received. However, some also expressed reservations about the way their children were taught to think about non-Muslims. Several parents expressed reservations about what they described as the tendency of some PKS teachers to speak about Muslims and Islam in "exclusive" terms. One middle-aged Yogyakarta father, who was deeply pious but had also been an activist in the Muslim socialist wing of the democracy movement in the 1990s put the matter in the following way:

> On one hand, the teachers instill a stronger spirit of democracy than do the state's public schools, because the children are taught to speak up and participate in class, not sit passively. But you know I worry about the way in which the children are so regularly reminded that non-Muslims are different, they're fated to go to hell, and they shouldn't be in positions of authority over Muslims. I don't know whether that's good for democracy.[3]

A year after our initial conversation, this man pulled his son out of the PKS school and enrolled him instead in a Muhammadiyah school. Interviews with parents that I conducted a decade later in Yogyakarta and West Java, however, indicated that in some PKS schools attitudes toward non-Muslims and Muslim rivals in traditionalist associations like Nahdlatul Ulama have in fact softened. The development reflects the fact that some PKS schools and party branches have sought to distance themselves from the movement's earlier criticisms of Sufi mysticism and traditionalist Islam. Two of the most accomplished academic commentators on the PKS, Yon Machmudi (2021) and Dirk Tomsa (2011), both have also taken note of the moderating trend. But both have added that the trend is criticized by other PKS activists, particularly those "who still hate [President Jokowi] and are unwilling to lessen their harsh criticism" (Machmudi 2021:177).

Although the first principle of integrated Islamic education is to bring Islamic exemplars and principles into all portions of the curriculum, many proponents of integrated schools see the "mixing" to which they are dedicated as also implying commitment to the larger goal of using education to bring about change in society. In particular, schools are supposed to serve not only as places for training young students but as instruments for religious appeal (Ind., *dakwah*) and the Islamization of society. A second-grade teacher at an integrated-Islam school in Tangerang, West Java, described the mission in the following terms:

> Our understanding of "integrated" [*terpadu*] is also seen in the way we encourage parents to become active in the school and teachers to become active in the community. You know in most public schools in Indonesia parental involvement in education stops at the entrance to the school. We don't agree with that. Many of our teachers are parents, and part of our mission is to allow them to become active in the community, particularly with regard to religious affairs. On the other hand, we also try to bring parents into the school, so they can learn what we do and hopefully they become more observant Muslims. We also try to be 'integrated' by getting better-off people in the community to provide scholarships for poorer students. You see in all this that our mission is not just to educate children. We also hope to bring poor people closer to the well off, and the school closer to the community.

Not all PKS-linked schools interpret this mission in equally activist terms. At another integrated school in nearby Garut, West Java, the teachers with whom I spoke remarked that they felt it imprudent to mix politics and education too openly. The school director explained that most students at the school came from families with backgrounds in Nahdlatul Ulama. Another administrator observed, "Talking about politics with these parents might only cause bad feelings." He then added,

> We're happy with the PKS social project of Islamic appeal (*dakwah*), but we don't want to get too directly involved in national politics. Parents here would protest if we were political in this way. It's better just to be professional, and let people make their own choices about party politics.[4]

Other teachers and administrators interviewed in 2005 and 2006, and in Makassar and Tasikmalaya in 2012 and 2015, however, made clear that they had no such qualms about using schools to engage the broader community. As one teacher in Yogyakarta explained to me in December 2006,

> The PKS is a party of *dakwah*, and the purpose of *dakwah* is not just to make Muslims more individually pious, but to build a better society and, at some point, a better state. Our religion commands us to do this, and as long as we

> pursue these goals in a democratic way, I don't think anyone has any right to object to what we do.

Although some parents may have reservations about certain aspects of the curriculum, many parents of democratic Islamist persuasion share this ethical ambition. One striking consequence of this support has been that by the mid-2010s the PKS-linked wing of the integrated school movement had grown to include some 2,000 schools.

Hidayatullah and Progressive Islamism

Headquartered in Jakarta and Gunung Tembak, a small village northeast of Balikpapan, East Kalimantan, the Hidayatullah school network was founded on a principle similar to that of PKS-linked schools: that while teaching children to be both learned and pious, Islamic schools should also contribute to the ethical transformation of society. As of 2020, the movement operates some 500 Islamic boarding schools in cities and towns across Indonesia, as well as 200 orphanages, and an emergency medical service that has earned high marks for the assistance it has provided in times of natural disasters. The social movement also has three colleges of Islamic higher education dedicated to the religious and professional training of movement cadres. Since 2013, the organization has also run an international university in Malang, East Java. That campus offers training in general professional skills, including accounting, computer science, information technology, and architecture.

In 2000 the Hidayatullah organization officially announced its transformation from an educational foundation into a work-within-the-system social organization (Ind., *organisasi massa, ormas*). Today the organization has more than 270 chapters across Indonesia. The movement's central premise is that "the backwardness of the Muslim world has been caused by a tendency to understand the holism [*keholistikan*] of Islamic teaching in an only partial manner"[5] (see also Njoto-Feillard 2010:363–80). To this end, the movement is dedicated not to the establishment of an Islamic state but to the realization of what is seen as a more urgent reality: a flourishing and all-encompassing Islamic civilization based on the Qur'an and Sunna and the integration of Qur'anic principles into the sciences of the world.

Although it is today one of Indonesia's largest and most effectively organized democratic Islamist organizations, the Hidayatullah movement originated as a small-scale, local undertaking. The first Hidayatullah boarding school was opened in January 1973 with the establishment of a *pesantren* on 60 hectares of land, awarded to the school by the Balikpapan regent (*bupati*), in what was at the time a forested corner of East Kalimantan. The *pesantren*'s five founders included individuals from Muslim traditionalist as well as modernist backgrounds. However, from the beginning the movement's educational activities were unambiguously reformist in spirit, with a strong emphasis on the Qur'an and Sunna, and a notable

lack of emphasis on the study of classical *fiqh* commentaries. However, unlike more exclusive modernist institutions, ritual practices popular in traditionalist circles, including the Sufi-inspired remembrance of God's names (*dzikr*), were and are still today observed.

In his youth, Abdullah Said (b. 1945), chief among the school's founders, had been raised in a Muhammadiyah family in Makassar, South Sulawesi; in high school he became active in modernist student clubs. He attended modernist boarding schools in Gontor and Bangil (see N. Hasan 2000:87). While living in West Java, Said is said to have developed ties to a clandestine but nonviolent wing of the Darul Islam. He is also said to been inspired by the life and ideals of Kahar Muzakkar, leader of the Darul Islam rebels in South Sulawesi in the 1950s and early 1960s (see Chapter 2).

But Said was no anti-system radical. In the 1960s, he had also been active in the Indonesian Student Action Union, known by the acronym KAMI. The latter was a multireligious student alliance which in 1965–6 had assisted General Suharto in his campaign to undermine President Sukarno and destroy the Communist Party. After moving to East Kalimantan, Said and his colleagues took care *not* to be seen as exclusivist Islamists opposed to the New Order government. They maintained cordial ties with local representatives of the nationally dominant Golkar Party. In 1976, the school was officially inaugurated by the then Minister of Religion, Mukti Ali. In 1984, President Suharto received Said at the presidential palace and awarded him the Kalpataru Medal of Honor for the school's contribution to East Kalimantan development programs.

The central ambition of the Hidayatullah *pesantren* was and is still today to use schooling to build a broader ethical community (Ind., *jemaah*) in which Islamic values and shariah law can be implemented in a comprehensive (*kaffah*) manner modeled not on the legal commentaries of classical Islam but on the phases of the life of the Prophet. This broad social goal was to be realized, then, not merely through an integrated school curriculum but by creating "an integrated form of society" itself seen as a step toward the realization of a modern and all-encompassing Muslim civilization.

Far more than their PKS counterparts, Hidayatullah activists interpret this principle of societal integration in egalitarian, transformative, and communitarian terms. Students and staff at Hidayatullah boarding schools are supposed to be "willing to let go of all the social attributes that they bring from outside and take on a status that is the same as all others" (PPIM 2004:63). At the Gunung Tembak school I visited, students and staff live in small cottages around a central campus, in homes that are neat but decidedly spartan. Staff are supposed to furnish their homes using furniture and implements provided by the school administration. Residents are also enjoined to avoid ostentatious clothing and luxury goods, as well as Western entertainments. Marriages are expected to be organizationally endogamous, and all are supposed to be approved (but not formally arranged) by senior religious scholars. Although some researchers who have visited the Balikpapan campus report that

nearby neighbors view Hidayatullah members as exclusivist, my interviews with non-movement neighbors in Balikpapapan (in 2005), as well as Yogyakarta and Solo (in 2012 and 2016) indicated that most neighbors regarded the activists as strict and self-regarding but, unlike the local Salafi community (Chapter 4), open and respectful in interaction with neighbors.

From its first days, staff at Gunung Tembak not only provided religious instruction but established small-business enterprises specializing in forest products, animal husbandry, road construction, and transportation. By the late 1970s, some of these enterprises had proved so profitable that the school directors resolved to establish branches of their school in other parts of Indonesia. In 1978, Hidayatullah leaders dispatched their first team of graduates to Java and Sulawesi to open branch schools and businesses. All of the missionaries were provided with start-up funds, sufficient to pay for three pairs of clothes, three months of food, and three months of house rent. The graduates' first duty was to engage in Islamic predication (*dakwah*), in the hope of recruiting a local network of supporters. But they were also expected to support themselves by engaging in crafts and trade. If its numbers grew, the branch was then supposed to establish a boarding school for recruiting additional followers.

Using this method of self-funded branch expansion, the school movement had established thirty branches by the end of the New Order in 1998. Over the next twenty years, the movement swelled to 500 branch institutions, most at first providing free religious education to their students. Although at first most schools did not provide a full, Ministry of Education–compliant general curriculum, this changed in the 2000s, when Hidayatullah schools began to offer the national curriculum alongside their religion courses. This same expansion of educational horizons underlay the national leadership's decision to establish institutions of higher learning.

Like their PKS counterparts, Hidayatullah schools today use an integrated curriculum which blends religious lessons into all portions of the curriculum. School officials prefer to refer to their curriculum as "integral" (Ind., *integral*) rather than *terpadu* ("blended," "integrated"), although they admit that its aims are similar. Notwithstanding the school movement's commitment to the virtues of simplicity and modesty, intellectual activity in the natural and technical sciences is highly prized, and pedagogy on these matters makes generous use of student discussion groups and talks by outside speakers expert in their respective technical field.

As also with PKS schools, Hidayatullah educators understand their mission of integration as including participation in the affairs of the surrounding community. Hidayatullah officers point out, however, that their understanding of integration differs in three basic ways from that of the PKS. First, and in keeping with its egalitarian understanding of the ideal Islamic community (*jemaah*), Hidayatullah gives priority in admissions to the poor and lower-middle class, rather than the middle and upper-middle classes who predominate in PKS schools. School officials explain that they see their segment of the educational market as the *mustad'afin*, the downtrodden and oppressed. In its early years, the Hidayatullah school in

Balikpapan charged no tuition, but as enrollments swelled the policy proved economically unfeasible. Rather than giving full scholarships, then, school directors appealed to local businesses to sponsor children's education. At a Hidayatullah school in Central Java that I visited in 2005 and again in 2010, businesspeople from the city provided full subsidies of Rp 85,000 per month (approximately U.S.$9 at the time; in 2015 the figure had blossomed to Rp 160,000) for fifty-six of the school's 263 students. A much larger number of students received partial scholarships, also as a result of the generosity of business patrons.

A second quality that Hidayatullah officials cite in distinguishing their schools from those of the PKS concerns the Hidayatullah's willingness to recruit students from diverse doctrinal backgrounds. In the words of the secretary of the regional Hidayatullah office in Yogyakarta:

> We don't fill our schools with just one group [*kelompok*]. We say "please enter" to people from all other groups. If you happen to be from PKS, Hizbut Tahrir, even Nahdlatul Ulama, it's no problem. This is our big difference with PKS. With them, if they learn that a person is not from their group, that fact has to be evaluated when considering a student for admission. . . . But our concern is to build an Islamic civilization, and there's no way that can be done if you walk alone.[6]

This second difference is in turn related to another of Hidayatullah's founding principles. Rather than striving for ideological unanimity, the leadership speaks of its organization as (in the words again of the above Yogyakarta officer) "just one organization among other Islamic organizations, and we don't want to consider ourselves the only one that is true."

There are nonetheless two normative principles to which all movement members are expected to subscribe, even though adherence to such principles is not required of students attending Hidayatullah schools. First, all members must agree with the goal of implementing Islamic law and values in an all-encompassing (*kaffah*) manner, first in their own lives, and eventually across the whole of society. Second, and in line with the fatwa issued by the MUI in 2005 (see Chapter 3), all must reject the "Western" values of secularism, pluralism (here understood to refer to the belief that all religions are equal), and liberalism. At the same time, however, Hidayatullah leaders and writers make clear that all such initiatives must steer clear of any acts of violence or political intimidation like that associated with the FPI or the JI (Chapter 4). For reasons related to allegations directed at Balikpapan officials in 2002, the movement's condemnation of violence has become more pronounced since 2002 and has led movement officials to cooperate extensively with state officials' anti-terror and anti-radicalism programs (see the subsequent section).

The third and final way in which Hidayatullah's understanding of integration differs from that of the PKS has to do with the Hidayatullah's linkage of schools

with business enterprise and the broader Muslim community. Reflecting once again the organization's entrepreneurial egalitarianism, officials say that leadership should be "rolling" (Ind., *roling*, from the English). This means that senior officials are expected at some point to rotate back into leadership positions in the school and the movement in an effort to refresh the leadership, spread the economic burdens associated with being a leader, and broaden ties to the community. A related feature of this principle is that the movement expects senior students to set up businesses even before they complete their studies with the understanding that the business will be used to recruit new members and raise funds for the mother school. After graduating, young businesspeople are expected to maintain ties with their school or "base" (again, the English term is used). Some are provided with start-up funds. However, once the enterprise is operational, grads are expected to donate 10% of their net income to the movement each year.

Back in 1986, students at the Surabaya Institute of Technology opened what was to become a particularly influential branch of the fledgling organization. In 1988, activists at this school launched the Voice of Hidayatullah (*Suara Hidayatullah*), a monthly journal which at its peak in the early 2000s had a circulation of 50,000 (today the figure is about 25,000; see Hasan 2000:89). From 1999 onward, the Surabaya office has also managed an online web version of the journal. In the early years of the *Reformasi* transition, the website's fierce broadsides against liberalism, secularism, and the West, and its accusations of Western (especially American) meddling in eastern Indonesia's sectarian violence, won Islamist readers on university campuses across Indonesia. In a 2008 article, Martin van Bruinessen described the journal as reading like "a broadsheet of the Islamist International," inasmuch as it is "fiercely anti-Jewish and anti-Christian" and regularly features "sympathetic articles on . . . all of the radical Islamic groups of the country" (van Bruinessen 2008:235).

However, as I discovered in speaking with senior leadership, the Surabaya-based journal's anti-Western diatribes caused disquiet among the second generation of officials who assumed leadership at the Balikpapan headquarters in the early 2000s.[7] I first met two senior members of the Hidayatullah leadership in July 2004, when they visited me on the campus of Boston University as part of a U.S. State Department visitor program for Indonesian Muslim educators. When the two individuals first contacted me to ask about the possibility of their visiting, I was surprised because a June 2002 report in the *New York Times* by a senior reporter Jane Perlez – who had visited the Balikpapan campus – had identified the Hidayatullah movement as linked to the terrorist JI (Perlez 2002). One year later, a detailed intelligence paper crafted by one of the most respected analysts of Indonesian affairs, Sidney Jones of the International Crisis Group, reported that in late 2002 JI activists involved in the Bali bombings (including Ali Imron, one of the terror group's ringleaders) had taken shelter in several Hidayatullah boarding schools while fleeing from Indonesian police just after the Bali attacks (ICG 2003:26). When I received the email in Boston in 2004, then, I was, to say the least,

curious as to how an allegedly extremist group had come to participate in a State Department visit to the United States.

During our meetings in Boston, and over the course of a three-day visit to the Balikpapan headquarters in 2005, the senior staff in the organization explained to me that after the report in the *New York Times*, Indonesian security officials had visited the main Hidayatullah campus. Rather than rejecting the allegations about the Bali bombers, Hidayatullah officials launched their own investigation into the matter. Staff soon confirmed that, while fleeing police, several Bali bombers had taken refuge for three days in Hidayatullah-linked schools. However, the internal probe also confirmed that the local school leaders had hosted the visitors without any authorization from the organization's central leadership. In late November 2002, these officials explained, the offending officials had been expelled from the organization. During my 2005 Balikpapan visit, and in front of an audience at an all-day seminar involving 150 faculty and administrators, senior officers also explained that they were in the process of instructing the editors of the *Hidayatullah* journal to tone down their broadsides. With a startling candor, they also told me that their efforts at first had met with opposition, since the journal editors felt that their militant messaging had succeeded in recruiting youthful members to the movement. The Balikpapan and Jakarta leadership pressed their case, however, and by 2006 the magazine had moderated its tone and shifted its primary reporting away from international affairs to matters of Islamic piety and learning. At the Hidayatullah movement's national congress in 2005, representatives renounced any association with groups advocating radical change or violence. In the years since, the movement has kept to this program of nonviolent shariah activism combined with economic and professional skill-training. As of 2021, the strategy has facilitated the movement's expansion to 200 chapters, three-fourths of which are outside of Java.

In short, both the PKS and Hidayatullah offer examples of Muslim school systems organized as social movements and dedicated to a nonviolent but comprehensive transformation of state and society. It is striking, however, that both school-based movements carry over a greater number of values and programs from the economic and business world than they do the political. In other words, both are relatively market- and enterprise-friendly, although in the case of Hidayatullah this disposition is blended with egalitarian and social-justice values. On matters of national politics, both school networks aspire to construct ethical frames dedicated to curing society's ills through the comprehensive realization of shariah law. Both movements also agree that, for the time being, the bases of the state can be nationalist and electorally democratic. At the same time, both movements emphasize the comprehensiveness of *shariah*, implying that at some future moment the foundations of the state will change as a result of society's greater realignment with shariah values.

Not all social-movement schools of an Islamist sort in contemporary Indonesia agree with the PKS and Hidayatullah on this last point. Some take strong exception

to an even temporary accommodation with the Indonesian nation-state. In the post-Suharto era, a few of these anti-system schools even became involved in violent challenges to the Indonesian state.

Framing Against Nation

As with the Persatuan Islam (Persis, Islamic Unity; see Federspiel 2001, and Hefner 2000:106–13), since the early decades of the twentieth century there have always been a small minority of Muslim educators who taught that Indonesian nationalism is antithetical to Islam. Although Persis schools were careful not to advocate violence, most remained resolutely opposed to nationalism as the basis of the state. Organizations like HTI (banned by the Jokowi administration in 2017) make a similar point today, arguing that nationalism was invented by European imperialists to prevent Muslims from uniting in opposition to the Western hegemony (Ahnaf 2021; Osman 2018). For most of Suharto's New Order, educators who voiced sentiments like these could find themselves detained or imprisoned, so people tended to keep these views to themselves.

The criticism, however, never stopped entirely. Even under Suharto, a clandestine network of independent schools continued to use classrooms as platforms for opposing the Indonesian nation-state. The schools most consistently involved in this effort were linked to an irredentist wing of the Darul Islam, the armed movement that had taken up arms against the nationalist government in 1948 and fought for the establishment of an Islamic state (see Formichi 2012; Soebardi 1983; van Dijk 1981). Today there are dozens of schools in South Sulawesi, Central Java, parts of Sumatra, and, especially, West Java operated by individuals once linked to the DI movement. However, as I discovered during visits to several schools in 2005, 2006, and 2010, the great majority of these schools have long since accommodated themselves to the Indonesian state and the ideals of Indonesian nationalism. Some – like the sprawling al-Zaytun *pesantren* complex in Indramayu, West Java (where I was welcomed for a one-week visit in August 2006) – have long since modernized their curricula, forged cordial ties with government ministries, and transformed themselves into ardent supporters of Indonesian nationalism. Nonetheless, a smaller network of schools committed to the DI's earlier anti-systemic radicalism maintained itself over the harsh years of the New Order. In the post-Suharto era several came up from underground and threw themselves into public mobilization. In schools of this sort today, the curriculum is often used as a platform for relentless anti-nationalist drilling. These schools teach that the principles of nationalism contradict God's commands, and that to participate in nationalist programs amounts to apostasy from Islam.

As discussed in Chapter 4, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's al-Mukmin *pesantren* outside of Solo, Central Java, is the most famous of the schools whose activities and curricular materials take strong exception to nationalist principles. It should be noted that, in most curricular respects, the al-Mukmin curriculum is not at all radical.

Ba'asyir was a graduate of the renowned modernist boarding school at Gontor (Castles 1967). As Charlene Tan has demonstrated in a careful study, and as my own visit (in 2007) and interviews with Ngruki graduates (2009–17) confirmed, in most of its programs al-Mukmin implements a variation on the well-respected Gontor curriculum (Tan 2011:46–50). This curriculum combines general studies and high-quality instruction in foreign languages (Arabic and English) with study of the Qur'an and Sunna. It downplays the importance of most of the classical texts prized in traditionalist schools, but it does so while carrying over most of the values and curricula emphasized in public schools for market-based professional success.

On such sensitive matters as relations with non-Muslims and the bases of the state, however, al-Mukmin's curriculum carries over very little from the national curriculum. In fact, the message is relentlessly anti-democratic and anti-Pancasila. For example, on the question of nationalism and the foundation of the state, textbooks 1A and 1B of the *pesantren*'s *Study Materials on Islamic Creed* [Materi Pelajaran Aqidah][8] make the following statement (the text is used for al-Mukmin's upper-level, elementary-, middle-, and high-school madrasas):

> To act for reasons of nation is polytheistic idolatry, and polytheism destroys the values of the Islamic profession of the faith. Truly, a Muslim is forbidden to defend their country except if its rules and constitution are based on Islam. If the country is based on Islam and carries out God's law, then a Muslim may act to defend the country, because in this case such an act is the same as defending Islam. However, if one acts to defend a country that clearly refuses God's law then that is polytheism [shirk].[9]

Polytheism is one of the most serious sins in Islam, and equating nationalism with polytheism is harsh condemnation indeed. As for those Muslims who insist that it is not appropriate to implement God's law in a country as religiously diverse as Indonesia, the text has an equally blunt message:

> That is the reason God ordered Muslims to attack them [non-believers] until truly the chaos that results from their actions can be wiped out, and truly the regulations that are applied to this world are only those of God's law, *shariah Islam*.[10]

Pages 34 to 38 of the same *Aqidah* textbook go further, laying out a program of struggle for the implementation of Islamic law. The program has three stages: (1) building a community of believers in opposition to unbelievers, (2) preparing a well-organized army, and (3) developing facility in the use of firearms. Consistent with the Wahhabi-Salafy principle of "alliance and dissociation" (*al-wala'wa al-bara'*) – the injunction for believers to love and cooperate with believers while shunning non-Muslims (Chapter 4; Wagemakers 2008) – Ngruki's texts also warn students against the dangers of befriending non-Muslims and inobservant Muslims.

It is interesting to note that, although the anti-systemic intent of passages like these seems clear enough, my interviews with students and teachers at the

al-Mukmin school indicated that most students hear the text's message in a surprisingly accommodating rather than fiercely oppositional manner. That is to say, they understand it as a long-term ethical aspiration rather than a call for immediate and radical action. In fact, many of al-Mukmin's students graduate and go on to state universities and otherwise ordinary careers in business and education. Of the fifteen Ngruki graduates with whom I conducted interviews between 2003 and 2015, ten insisted that they had no interest in opposing the nationalist bases of the Indonesian state. All pointed out that, although some of Ngruki's students are politically radical, the majority are not. Most students, these interviewees explained, are drawn to Ngruki because of the quality of its educational programs and the ready availability of generous scholarships. These students observed (and Muslim educators at nearby Islamic schools agreed) that Ngruki has a reputation for providing some of the finest instruction in all of Central Java in Arabic, English, and computer programming.

In off-the-record interviews conducted in 2004, 2009, and 2015, several teachers went further, expressing embarrassment at Ngruki's ties to the 2002 Bali bombers. They insisted that they and their colleagues want nothing to do with terrorism. One teacher told me that, in the 2004 parliamentary elections, most of the staff had turned away from the school's long-preferred party, the Crescent and Stars Party (PBB), an exclusivist Islamist party loosely descendant from the Masyumi party of the 1950s (and an advocate of a state-sponsored implementation of Islamic law). The majority of staff cast their vote instead for the democratic Islamist PKS. One teacher pointed to the vote as evidence that a more "moderate" (Ind., *moderat*) current was in the ascendance at Ngruki.[11] Five years later when I met with the same teacher, he assured me his voting preferences had not changed and that the majority of the staff at the Ngruki school now wished to put even greater distance between themselves and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir's politics.

Whatever the Ngruki staffers' personal views, the school's curriculum still makes clear that the directors regard the present form of the Indonesian state as illegitimate. In interviews and statements, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir has never repudiated these views, emphasizing that both nationalism and democracy are contrary to God's law (Chapter 4). His former colleague and cofounder of al-Mukmin, Abdullah Sungkar (1937–99), is known to have been even more adamantly opposed to democracy and Pancasila pluralism. To judge by the actions of groups like the JI, some of Sungkar and Ba'asyir's former students – especially those that had the additional experience of participating in the anti-Soviet *jihad* in Afghanistan – have taken al-Mukmin's *aqidah* curriculum at its word (see also Hasan 2006).

Horn of a Dilemma: Muslim Educators and Shariah Reform

The larger question raised by the phenomenon of social-movement schools is just what the attitude of the majority of Muslim educators is on questions related to democracy, pluralism, non-Muslims, and gender equality. In an effort to answer these questions (and as briefly discussed in Chapter 2), in January 2006 I worked

with staff at the PPIM at the Hidayatullah National Islamic University in Jakarta to carry out a survey of 1,000 Muslim educators in 100 madrasas and Islamic boarding schools in eight provinces in Indonesia. The survey was codirected by Jamhari Makruf of the PPIM and coordinated in the field by eight staff members from the PPIM. The interviews were carried out by senior college students hired and trained by the PPIM in each of the eight provinces. The full survey had 184 questions, the aggregate results of which are too complex to present here. However, the second column of Table 5.1 summarizes the data that dealt with Muslim educators' attitudes toward democracy and shariah. The first column presents data from a near-identical survey of 1,000 members of the general Muslim public in eight regions across Indonesia. In 2004, I had also conducted this latter survey in conjunction with PPIM researchers. Together the surveys allow a comparison of the general Muslim public's views with those of Muslim educators.

The survey data point to several striking facts, the most interesting of which concerns the Muslim public's and educators' views on democracy and *shariah*. On the one hand, an impressive 71.6% of the Muslim public and 85.9% of Muslim educators agree that democracy is the best form of government for Indonesia. Equally striking, neither the public nor the educators' support is formalistic or based on a crudely majoritarian understanding of democracy. The public and the educators' views instead extend to subtle matters of civil rights. These include support for the equality of all citizens before the law, no matter what their political persuasion (82.8% for the general public, 94.2% for Muslim educators); citizen freedom to join political organizations (79.5% and 82.5%, respectively); legal protections for the media from arbitrary government interference (78.6% and 92.8%); and the notion that open party competition helps to improve the performance of government (74.7% and 80%). These figures are comparable to or even higher than survey data on similar issues from Western Europe and the United States and indicate again that Muslim educators' understanding of democracy is not in any simple way formalistic or majoritarian (cf. Inglehart and Norris 2003). Equally important, and with only minor exceptions, the Muslim educators' commitment to democratic values is stronger than the already high level of support found among the Muslim public. The educators' support for democracy and civil rights should dispel any impression that the Muslim educational establishment as a whole is a reactionary drag on an otherwise democratic-minded public.

If this were all there were to educators' attitudes on democracy and human rights, it would be smooth sailing indeed. However, educators' views on electoral democracy, an independent media, and equality before the law are complemented by an (almost) equally strong commitment to the idea that both state and society should work to uphold *shariah* law. As I discuss in Chapter 7, and as more recent survey data have confirmed (Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida 2018), on this matter Muslim public opinion in Indonesia, and especially among educators, reflects ambivalences found across broad swaths of the Muslim world with the notable exception of Muslim Central Asia and the Balkans (Pew 2013:16). Like those here

TABLE 5.1 Muslim educators' attitudes on democracy and Islam

No.	*Percentage Who Agree With the Following Statements*	*2004 Survey (%)*	*2006 Survey (%)*
Support for Democracy			
1.	Democracy, compared to other forms of governance, is the best form of government for a country like ours.	71.6	85.9
2.	Democracy is a source of political disorder.	7.0	8.1
3.	Every citizen is equal before the law regardless of his or her political views.	82.8	94.2
4.	Every citizen should be allowed to join any political organization.	79'5	82.5
5.	Mass media should be protected by law from the arbitrary actions of government.	78.6	92.8
6.	Our economy will be better if the government gives more freedom to each citizen to do as he or she wishes.	76.9	73.4
7.	Free and fair contestation between political parties improves the performance of government of this country.	74.7	80
Support for Shari'a and Islamism			
1.	Islamic governance, that is, governance based on the Qur'an and Sunna under the leadership of Islamic authorities, is the best for this nation.	72.2	72.2
2	The state should enforce the obligation to implement Islamic law (shariah) for all Muslims.	75.5	82.8
3	The amputation of the hand of a thief as prescribed in the Qur'an should be enforced by the government.	38.9	59.1
4.	In general elections Muslims should only elect candidates who understand and fight for the implementation of Islamic regulations in politics.	59.5	63.9
5.	In general elections voters should only support Islamic parties.	29.5	24.3
6.	Muslims who do not perform their religious duties should not be allowed to be members of the MPR or parliament.	45.6	74.3
7.	The ideals and practices of Islamic organizations such as Darul Islam, Negara Islam Indonesia, Front Pembela Islam, and Laskar Jihad to implement Islamic law (shariah) in the society and polity should be supported.	55.6	64.4
8.	The practices of polygyny should be allowed.	33.0	75.7
9.	Females should not be allowed to take long trips without being accompanied by a close family member or relative.	60.7	79.6

(*Continued*)

TABLE 5.1 (Continued)

No.	*Percentage Who Agree With the Following Statements*	*2004 Survey (%)*	*2006 Survey (%)*
10.	The government (police) should engage in surveillance so as to make sure that Muslims perform the Ramadan fast.	33.0	49.9
11.	The government (police) should close restaurants during Ramadan.	69.3	82.9
12.	The government (police) should engage in surveillance (*mengawasi*) to make sure that two persons (male and female) walking together in the street are married or relatives.	43.7	66.6

Survey 2004 is based on a survey of 1,000 members of the general Muslim public in eight provinces across Indonesia. The year 2006 data are based on a survey of 940 Muslim teachers in secondary-level Islamic schools (madrasas and *pesantrens*) in eight provinces.

in Indonesia, Muslims in the Middle East and South Asia show "strong support for Islam and democracy" but "also reveal widespread support for *Sharia*" (Esposito and Mogahed 2007:35).

Among Muslim educators here in Indonesia, 72.2% say that the state should be based on the Qur'an and Sunna as advised by religious experts. A full 82.8% of educators feel the state should work to implement shariah. Support for state-enforced and legislatively modernized shariah hesitates on a few points. For example, it drops to 59.1%, when the regulation in question concerns the amputation of thieves' hands or government efforts to compel performance of the Ramadan fast (49.9% agree). On these matters, at least, some educators – still a minority – seem to have second thoughts about a too-strict implementation of the law. Nonetheless, when asked whether inobservant Muslims should be allowed to serve in the National Assembly, 74.3% of educators feel they should not. A full 64.4% agree with Muslim militants' campaigns to implement Islamic law.

All of these "illiberal" measures are somewhat higher than those for the lay Muslim public in Indonesia as a whole. But the findings indicate that among this critical segment of the Muslim public, the commitment to democracy and civic freedoms is strong but that commitment does not extend to support for a religiously inclusive citizenship (see Chapter 2, and Fealy 2016a; Menchik 2016). Significantly, too, more recent survey research suggests that, since the 2016–17 mobilization in Jakarta against Governor Ahok, exclusivist sentiments like these have increased (see Chapter 7; Mietzner and Muhtadi 2020).

On matters of women and non-Muslims, too, the tension between educators' support for democracy and civil rights, on one hand, and their understanding of the *shariah*, on the other, is no less striking. Some 93.5% of the educators believe that a non-Muslim should not be allowed to assume the presidency. A full 55.8%

feel that women should not run for the office. Some 51.3% feel that women should not serve as judges. About 20% would bar non-Muslims from teaching in public schools; a similar percentage want to prohibit non-Muslims from performing religious services in Muslim areas. Twice that percentage would bar non-Muslims from erecting houses of worship near Muslim neighborhoods. Other survey data show a similarly illiberal quality on matters of non-Sunni varieties of Islam, including Shi'ias and Ahmadis. In fact, and as Fealy (2016a), Menchik (2016), and Pew Center surveys have also shown, on questions of Sunni orthodoxy Indonesian Muslims today rank among the *least* tolerant in the Muslim-majority world (see Chapter 4; ICG 2008; Pew 2013).

Adding to the impression of exclusivity on matters of religion and citizenship are findings from a national survey carried out in late 2016 by the same research center with which I worked in 2006 and 2007, the Center for the Study of Religion and Society (PPIM) at the Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta. This study found that teachers of Islam in Indonesia's public schools – most of whom are graduates of the same State Islamic University and College system (UIN/IAIN) that has pioneered programs of civic education since the late 1990s – show a similar double consciousness. Respondents voiced strong support for democracy and Indonesia's Pancasila variety of pluralist citizenship. But they were reluctant to extend equal citizen rights to non-Muslim minorities and out-of-the-mainstream varieties of Islam, including Shi'is and Ahmadis (Chapter 5; Burhani 2013a; Syafruddin et al. 2018).

These data bear witness to a continuing and serious ethical dilemma for Indonesian Muslims of pro-democracy and inclusive persuasion. The Muslim public and educators' commitments to democracy, rights of political association, and press freedoms appear as strong or stronger as anywhere in the Muslim-majority world. However, where a democratic principle conflicts with an issue on which authoritative religious scholars claim a shariah principle applies, the majority of people feel that piety requires that they defer to what are seen as divine commands. This deference results in judgments that many observers, including most Muslim democrats, regard as inconsistent with democracy and citizen inclusivity (see Menchik 2016).

The survey data suggest two additional conclusions. On one hand, the Muslim public's commitment to democracy testifies to one of the more remarkable changes in Muslim political culture in modern times: the fact that growing numbers of Muslims see democracy as compatible with Islam. Here is a cultural globalization of far-reaching political importance, but one often overlooked in discussions of modern Muslim politics (but see Kuru 2019a; Norris and Inglehart 2004). Second, and less brightly, the public's commitment to democracy coexists with an almost equally strong commitment to shariah law – the latter understood not in the capacious and ethically reformed manner taught in the State Islamic University system but in a formalistic and essentialized way (see Chapter 7). Most Muslim political theorists of democratic persuasion – including the current leadership of Nahdlatul

Ulama (Chapter 7; Lohlker 2021; Shah and Dinham 2021) – regard a non-holistic implementation of the *shariah* as incompatible with modern democracy. One might be tempted to say that the data point to a clash of cultures not so much between "democracy and shariah" but between profoundly opposed understanding of the shariah's higher aims (*maqasid*; Chapters 3 and 7).

However, although it is real enough, the tension between *shariah* idealism and democratic inclusivity may not be as severe as these survey data at first suggest. As Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani (2018) have shown, and as discussed in Chapter 2, the single greatest indicator of this fact is that, however much the Muslim public voices support for the *shariah* in opinion surveys, that sentiment does not translate into large numbers of voters prioritizing political parties committed to the implementation of Islamic law. All of the political parties that made implementing the *shariah* a central feature of their political platforms have fared poorly in the national elections held every five years since 1999. As noted in Chapter 2, my one-on-one interviews with 400 educators between 2004 and 2010 revealed a similar pattern: Only 24% gave their support to Islamist parties advocating the long-term implementation of shariah, and most of these gave their vote to the PKS. Since 1999 the PKS has downplayed its commitment to state-enforced shariah in favor of a program emphasis on personal piety, clean government, and economic growth (Machmudi 2021).

Does this mean that the data indicating broad support for *shariah* are inaccurate or alternately that Indonesian Muslim educators are hypocrites? The discrepancy between the poll data and electoral choices can be interpreted in several ways. However, based on interviews over a fifteen-year period, I think it reflects two unresolved developmental tensions. First, it shows that, like their counterparts in much of the world, Indonesian Muslims have concluded that the *shariah* is God's guidance for humanity and, as such, it must be just and true. This conclusion is one that is widely shared, including by such secular and democratic Muslim intellectuals as Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im (An-Na'im 2008:2).

Second, and notwithstanding the ambitions of exclusivist Islamists, for most Muslims this generalized commitment to shariah is not regarded as a finished blueprint for action. It does not generate finished or specific procedural priorities for how to behave politically, even with regard to measures (like voting in national elections) in support of the implementation of a statist version of Islamic law. In other words, rather than agreeing with exclusivist Islamist claims that the *shariah* is clear and unchanging and that its implementation will solve all of Indonesia's problems, most Muslims appear uncertain as to the law's practical entailments and prefer a cautious and empirical approach to social problems. The most striking consequence of rational deliberations like these is that, just as Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani (2018) have shown, only a tiny percentage of Indonesian Muslims regard state implementation of shariah law as an urgent political priority.

These findings "from the field," so to speak, are consistent with recent scholarship on Islamic law from other parts of the world. These studies show that in its

social uses the *shariah* is as much or even more a "vocabulary of morality and justice" than it is an entity akin to Western positive law (Zubaida 2003:11). More subtly yet, these findings are also consistent with another of Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani's (2018) findings with regard to Indonesian Muslims. Their research shows that Indonesian Muslims who self-identify as pious in terms of the rigor of their observance (daily prayer, performance of the fast, etc.) are *not* significantly more inclined to lend their support to Islamist parties prioritizing the establishment of a state based on Islamic law. More generally, the latter authors show – and the argument of the present book agrees – "piety does not entail support for political Islam" because "other concerns dominate Islam in explaining mass support for political parties" (Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018:92). In particular, and as we have seen, when Indonesian Muslims are asked what the government's three main priorities should be, implementation of shariah is a "top three priority for only 2.3% of respondents." In striking contrast, the percent regarding "increase popular welfare," "provide free primary education," "decrease unemployment," or "stabilize the prices of basic goods" as urgent priorities come to 61.7%, 38.8%, 37.1%, and 27.5% of the respondents, respectively.

If these findings are accurate, which I think they are, it means that the educators' and public's commitment to shariah is real but also, so to speak, procedurally underspecified. The commitment coexists with and is often overshadowed by an equally important conviction that solving problems of unemployment and corruption requires pragmatic instruments, not just absolutist notions of the good. Parties or actors that can demonstrate that implementing *shariah* can solve practical problems may yet be able to tap this otherwise amorphous reservoir of public support for God's law. But those that simply repeat that the law is the panacea for all social problems will not necessarily be rewarded with public support.

Piety, one can conclude, can be and typically is linked to practical matters of rational deliberation and ethical prioritization. As a result, not piety alone, but "the social and economic transformations that are co-occurring alongside the resurgence of Islam in Indonesia are the best predictors of how Muslims think and behave" (Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018:23). These same changes are also important predictors of just what values and programs are deemed most urgent and effective for the realization of what really matters, Islamically speaking.

Conclusion

In an article published in 1960, a young American anthropologist named Clifford Geertz surveyed the state of Islamic education in Indonesia, directing his gaze toward the *pesantren* and the figure of its *shaykh* director, known in Java as *kyai*. Geertz observed that the rise of nationalism in Indonesia had displaced many traditional leaders and created a dangerous gap between the country's new secular nationalist leaders and a citizenry "still largely absorbed" in "a plurality of distinct regional cultures" (Geertz 1960b:228). Geertz also speculated that the *kyai* might

be uniquely situated to mediate this divide by serving as a cultural broker between an otherwise distant national leadership and the Muslim masses.

It was the conclusion to Geertz's article, however, that reads so presciently still today. If the *kyai* was to be an effective broker, Geertz observed, Islamic education was going to have to change:

> Only through the creation of a school at once as religiously satisfying to the villager as the pesantren, and as instrumentally functional to the growth of the "new Indonesia" as the state-run secular schools can the kijaji [kyai] . . . become a man once more competent to stand guard "over the crucial junctures of synapses of relationships which connect the local system with the larger whole". . . .Failing this the kijaji's days as a dominant force in pious Javanese villages are numbered, and the role of Islam in shaping the directions of political evolution in Indonesia is likely to be marginal at best.
>
> *(Geertz 1960b:228–9)*

Leaping forward three-quarters of a century from the years of Geertz's field work, it is startling to realize that much of the educational infrastructure Geertz envisioned – but believed was not likely to ever be built – has actually been put in place. Indonesia's Islamic schools have taken giant steps to close the gap between general and religious education. They have built bridges between Islamic and non-Islamic higher education. In the course of doing so, Indonesia's Muslim educators have created one of the finest Islamic university systems in the world (Abdullah 2017; Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007:188–91; Lukens-Bull 2013).

Much as Geertz had hypothesized, the reconstruction of Islamic education has also buttressed the "role of Islam in shaping the directions of political evolution in Indonesia." On this last point, however, events in Indonesia since the return to democracy in 1998–9 have proved more complicated than even Geertz imagined. Rather than enhancing the role of the *kyai* and creating a neatly unified community of believers, Muslim Indonesia has witnessed an agonistic pluralization of Islamic learning, ethics, and authority. The old division between Islamic modernists and traditionalists has not entirely disappeared, but it has been reworked to such a degree that, as Dhofier (1999:xxx) had already observed in the 1980s, "the traditionalist-modernist dichotomy has ceased to be fruitful" in political and cultural analyses (see also Burhani 2013c, 2021; Lukens-Bull 2005:6–9).

In one respect, this pluralization has been enormously beneficial for Muslim cultural development. The process has unleashed a creative competition for Muslim hearts and minds, expressed in a proliferation of democracy-affirming political parties, a bold Islamic publishing industry, and innovative Islamic schools. Equally impressive, many Muslim players have concluded that the way to handle the new plurality is for everyone to agree to play by the rules of a democratic game.

Certainly, the pluralization of Muslim schooling and authority has also given rise to a rejectionist fringe willing and able to defy the will of the majority.

This community condemns democracy, nationalism, gender equality, and modern citizenship as antithetical to Islam. Far more worrying, an even smaller number of rejectionists have framed their stance as a civilizational clash not between varied interpretations of Islam but between godlessness and God's commands (Yilmaz 2021). This frame is so absolutist that, if one accepts its core premise, actions of the most extreme nature appear justified. While only a tiny proportion of Indonesia's Islamic schools subscribe to this viewpoint, the fringe has not hesitated to use violence to achieve its ends.

It is important, however, to keep these extreme views in perspective. Indonesia has 66,000 Islamic schools. Of these, schools advocating the violent overthrow of the state number only several dozens (see Wahid 2013). For every anti-system school, there are thousands operated by the Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and like-minded organizations committed to multireligious nationalism. The great majority of these latter schools are not "liberal" in the modern Anglo-American sense of the term (see Chapter 2). But they are keen on the idea of Indonesia and the country's experiment with democracy and more enthusiastic yet about their country becoming prosperous and well-educated. Moreover, whereas in a country like Egypt Islamists had by the 1980s moved into the vacuum created by the state's inability to provide basic services for the poor (see Clark 2004; Wickham 2002), in Indonesia services of this sort have long since been provided by mass organizations of a Muslim democrat and Pancasila pluralist sort. Although their mettle was tested in the crisis years of 1959–66, these mainline groups today have reestablished themselves as pillars of Indonesian civil society – albeit ones now complemented by democratic Islamist organizations like the PKS and Hidayatullah.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there remain unresolved tensions in Muslim Indonesian politics, ethics, and education. We catch a glimpse of these ambivalences in mainstream educators' twin commitment to both democracy and a state-enforced *shariah*. The commitment to Islamic law, of course, has to be balanced against the fact that, in the voting booth, most Muslims lend their support to political parties supportive of the multireligious ideals of Indonesian nationalism. Here is a cultural current that will continue to pulse through Muslim politics and culture for years to come.

These varied data, then, point to three conclusions: first, that debates over the role of *shariah* in public life are likely to remain a key feature of Indonesian education and politics for some time (Chapter 7); second, that the public's stated interest in *shariah* does not pre-empt other concerns or result in voters identifying implementation of a state-codified shariah as a political priority; and, third, that the public's desire to implement *shariah* in an uncontextualized manner will not likely increase except if its associated aspiration for economic prosperity and social justice is frustrated (cf. Warburton and Aspinall 2019). I return to all three of these points in Chapter 7's discussion of shariah and Islamic ethics.

Of course, this prognosis leaves the precise nature of Muslim politics and ethics in a future Indonesia unclear. But it hints at another, no less important trend, this

one in the educational field. It is that Muslim schools will remain central to efforts to establish the intellectual and ethical priorities of modern Muslim politics and culture. In other words, contrary to what we heard two generations ago, Islamic schools will not be pushed to the margins of the modern Muslim experience; they will remain at its heart. The reason this is so is that Muslim schooling like that here in Indonesia offers a unique public forum for answering the question of how to carry over the ethical priorities of economic welfare, social justice, and national belonging into new ideals and practices of Islamic piety.

Notes

1 Interview with Mansur Zawawi, Jombang, East Java, December 10, 2005.
2 Interview with teacher at Sekolah Dasar Islam terpadu in Tangerang, West Java, December 6, 2005.
3 Interview, Yogyakarta father, August 12, 2006.
4 Interview, Tangerang, West Java, December 6, 2005.
5 Interview with Hidayatullah spokesperson, Gunung Tembak, December 17, 2005.
6 Interview with DPD Secretary for Hidayatullah Office Yogyakarta-Sleman, February 13, 2006.
7 Interview with Hidayatullah teachers, Gunung Tembak, Balikpapan, December 17, 2005.
8 See No Author, *Aqidah 1A* and *Materi Pelajaran Aqidah 1b* (Surakarta: Pondok Pesantren Islam al-Mukmin, n.d.).
9 *Aqidah 1b*, p. 17.
10 *Aqidah 1a,* p. 38.
11 Interview with Ngruki instructor (name withheld at instructor's request), February 7, 2006.

6

WOMEN AND GENDER CONTENTION

The agonistic plurality seen in so many domains of Indonesian life in the *Reformasi* era also characterized public discussions of women's roles in the post-Suharto period. On the one hand, the opening of the political process to electoral competition and broadened public dialogue provided new opportunities for reform-minded voices, including those of and for women. As I witnessed first-hand during a visit to Jakarta in February 1998, women activists in groups like "Voices of Concerned Women" (*Suara Ibu Peduli*; see Aspinall 2005a:214, 229) had played a pivotal role in catalyzing opposition to Suharto in the final months of the New Order regime. Another network with whom I have collaborated since the mid-1990s, women graduates of the State Islamic University and College system (UIN/IAIN) were at the forefront of the new women's movements that rose to prominence in the first years of the democratic transition. Among their many endeavors, they led the way during 2001–2 in efforts to craft gender-equitable reforms to the Compilation of Islamic Law (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam*) used in the country's Islamic courts (see the subsequent section and Lindsey 2012; Musdah Mulia and Cammack 2007; Qibtiyah 2021).

This latter initiative was illustrative of two broader trends with regard to Indonesian Muslim women in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The first was that women affiliated with Muslim mass-organizations played a role in the campaign for women's empowerment larger than ever before in Indonesian history (see Rinaldo 2013; Robinson 2009). The second trend was that a key feature of these women's activism involved engagement with not just global feminism and secularist discourses but Islamic legal and scriptural traditions, which the activists referenced to provide Islamic rationales for equity-oriented reforms (Hefner 2016b; Nurmila 2020; Robinson 2009; Syamsiyatun 2008:140). Although the formulation of religiously based discourses for women's recognition has been a key ingredient in

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-6

global Muslim feminism since the late 1980s (Barlas 2002; Mir-Hosseini 2015), the Indonesian campaign was in one respect distinctive. The effort was not confined to small circles of intellectual elites but was undertaken by activists in Muslim women's organizations with millions of members, including Muslimat NU and Fatayat NU, as well as the Muhammadiyah-linked groups, Aisyiyah and Nasyiat (Doorn-Harder 2006; Feillard and Doorn-Harder 2013; Kull 2005; Nurmila 2009; Qibtiyah 2021; Syamsiyatun 2008).

As is clear by this point in this book, however, electoral democracy both requires and remakes political culture, and the culture-making process often results in heightened contestation over ethnoreligious identities and citizen belonging (Gorski 2017; Hansen 2019). The Indonesian transition has been marked by claims and counter-claims of just this sort and nowhere more forcefully than with regard to gender and sexuality (Boellstorf 2005; Rinaldo 2013; Smith-Hefner 2019). The country's return to electoral democracy lifted many of the New Order controls on ethnic, religious, and regional groupings of an undemocratic and exclusivist nature (Chapter 4). The opening provided new opportunities for exclusivist Islamist movements to assert their influence in the public sphere. A central theme in many of their campaigns was the promotion of an asymmetrical and inegalitarian understandings of women's roles.

In this spirit, for example, several Muslim men's groups in the early *Reformasi* era launched a campaign promoting polygamy as an ideal form of marriage and the most effective instrument for controlling an alleged plague of sexual immorality afflicting the country (Rinaldo 2013:97). "Many Islamists . . . support the promotion of polygamy as the promotion of an 'Islamic value', to counter and even resist western culture, which they regard as against polygamy but allowing sex without marriage" (Nurmila 2009:9). Salafists associated with movements under the leadership of figures like Jafar Umar Thalib and Abu Nida (Chapter 4) had long presented polygamy as an ideal form of marriage, but they had done so in a manner that distinguished their Salafist observance from mainline Indonesian Muslims, whom they decried as impious. Although recognized in Islamic law and also practiced by Balinese Hindus and Papuan traditionalists, polygamy is statistically uncommon in Indonesia and strongly discouraged but not forbidden outright by mainline reformists in groups like the Muhammadiyah (Qibtiyah 2021; van Doorn-Harder 2013). In late colonial times, polygamous marriage was most widely practiced not in *santri* circles but among the elite aristocrats known in Java as *priyayi* – a hereditary upper class regarded in earlier times as indifferent to shariah-based norms (see Dzuhayatin 2001; Sutherland 1979). Notwithstanding the marital practice's low incidence, in the *Reformasi* era support for polygamy became a key referent in the culture war between progressive Muslims and the exclusivist wing of the Islamist community. The issue was brought into public focus as a result of several influences, including the pro-polygamy campaigns, cinematic idealizations of polygamous relationships (as in the 2008 box-office hit *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* [Verses of Love]), and the controversy that erupted in 2006 in the aftermath of one of

Indonesia's most popular celebrity preachers, Aa Gymnastiar, taking a second wife (Hoesterey 2008, 2015).

The proponents of asymmetrical gender ideals were active on legislative fronts as well. In 2005–6, an alliance of democratic Islamists, many with ties to the PKS, crafted a far-reaching bill ostensibly intended to curb pornography. In addition to banning internet and print pornographic media, the legislation sought to prohibit art forms, form-fitting ethnic dress, and public expressions of affection long regarded as acceptable in most Indonesian circles (Allen 2007; Lindsey 2012:246–83). Although at first the bill sparked strong opposition from an alliance of progressive Muslims, secular feminists, Balinese Hindus, and Pancasila-minded nationalists, a revised version of the bill was finally enacted in 2008. Its prospects for passage had been boosted by last-minute support from Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama representatives. The leadership of these latter organizations switched to backing the bill after several of the draft law's more controversial clauses were rewritten and after it became clear that the majority of their constituents supported the legislation in the hope that it might curb the flow of hard-core pornography flooding the country via the internet. The bill also benefited from the support of secular nationalist parties like Golkar, whose leadership switched sides so as to court support among socially conservative Muslims (Lindsey 2012:457; Salim 2008:124).

A similar but even more consequential process of transactional bargaining facilitated the passage of so-called shariah by-laws (*perda syariah*) in districts and towns across Indonesia during this same period. Although their precise content varied, much of the legislation featured restrictions on women's clothing as well as their public movement at night, when not accompanied by a non-marriageable male kin (*muhrim*; see Lindsey 2012:363–79). In more recent years, the campaign against egalitarian gender norms has taken a forceful culture-war form, with the establishment in 2016 of anti-feminist groups like "Indonesia Without Feminism" (*Islam tanpa feminisme*) and the Indonesian Alliance for the Love of the Family (AILA/*Aliansi Cinta Keluarga Indonesia)*. Both groups have close ties to the PKS and the revivalist *tarbiyah* movement (see the subsequent section and Chapter 4). Their ascendance is one more example of the fact that, although Islamists and revivalists have not had great success in national elections, they have made significant inroads in the public sphere, not least with regard to gender norms (Chapter 2).

This chapter examines these and other contentions over knowing and practicing gender in an Islamic way and explores their implications for women's roles and citizenship in Indonesia today. Although a comprehensive understanding of gender requires attention to men as well as women, and transgendered sexualities as well as hetero-normativities (Boellstorf 2004; Peletz 1994, 2009; Wieringa 2002, 2015), for reasons of space and my own research limitations (my research on gender matters prioritized examination of Muslim women's groups), my discussion here focuses on contests with regard to womanhood and Islam.

The chapter makes four key points. First, it emphasizes that women's roles became one of the most contentious issues in the new democratic period,

notwithstanding the hopes of Muslim feminists and other gender progressives that electoral democracy would boost prospects for equity-minded gender reform. Around the modern world, women's roles have long been a focus of contention in matters related to citizenship and nation-making. Nationalism and nationalist movements are always deeply gendered with ideals of womanhood and family figuring at their core (Yuval-Davis 1997). Here in Indonesia, the question of women's place in the nation has been the subject of dispute between the secular and Muslim nationalist wings of Indonesia's independence movement since the 1920s (Blackburn 2008; Wieringa 2002). In the 1990s and 2000s, the contention acquired an additional measure of complexity because the democracy movement's emergence coincided with a nationwide Islamic resurgence. The result was that rival ways of knowing and practicing Islam came to be entangled with opposing ideals of femininity, democratic equality, and national belonging.

Second, the emergence of Islamist movements promoting restrictive or subordinate roles for Muslim women is best characterized as neither a "conservative" restoration of traditional roles nor a product of a binary contest between the forces of democratization and those of "Islamization." Most of the practices of dress, courtship, marriage, and gender segregation promoted by Islamists and revivalists were *not* conservative in the literal sense that they harkened back to long-established gender practices in Indonesia. Most instead were *new* gender constructs of a repressively transformationist nature (Chapter 1), forged in opposition to long established gender legacies. Many too were modeled on transnational prototypes claimed by their promoters to be more authentic and universal because believed to be in conformity with shariah norms.

Similarly, the gender contestation did not neatly pose the proponents of democracy against supporters of "Islamization" but involved serious disputes *within* the Muslim community between the proponents of different varieties of gender normativity, and different ways of knowing and practicing Islam. No less significant, and as Rinaldo (2013) has also emphasized, even in the ranks of democratic Islamists like those associated with the PKS, women activists aspired to exercise greater agency, carrying over at least some of the ideals of democratic equality and freedom into their political and professional lives.

Third, although anti-liberal gender voices achieved greater notoriety in *Reformasi* Indonesia, the broader pattern of change was not by any means consistently antithetical to women's social progress – nor, again, was the pattern governed by any single regulatory logic. Since the late 1990s, there has been a steady growth in nongovernmental organizations like Rahima (est. 2000), oriented to providing education and legal support for women's rights (van Doorn-Harder 2006; Nurmila 2020). Such rights-expanding initiatives have come to include providing legal counsel for women in Indonesia's Islamic courts. The latter handle marital disputes and divorce, and over the past twenty years judges have tended to extend greater protection to women claimants while being "less tolerant of – and more punitive toward – errant husbands" (Peletz 2022:312; cf. Sumner and Lindsey

2010). In 1999, President Abdurrahman Wahid chose a respected Muslim feminist, Khofifah Indar Parawansa, to lead the Ministry for Women's Affairs, the name of which she promptly changed to the State Ministry for Women's Empowerment (Wieringa 2015:32). (In 2018, the still-popular Parawansa was elected Governor of East Java.) In 2004 the National Assembly passed an Anti-Domestic Violence Law, which among other things for the first time defined and prohibited marital rape (Katjasungkana 2014). Young women's achievement in higher education also increased steadily, and by the early 2000s women's higher educational achievement equaled or exceeded that of young men (see the subsequent section). Women's rates of participation in the labor force – at 53% among the highest in the Muslim world – held steady, although wage disparities between male and female workers remained pronounced.

Another positive sign of the times, the efforts of exclusivist Islamists to promote polygamy sparked fierce opposition. Although in some middle-class and upper-middle-class circles the practice became slightly more common, there was no dramatic uptick in the country's historically low rates of polygamous marriage (Nurmila 2009; Smith-Hefner 2019:153). From the 2000s onward, there *was* a growing campaign on university campuses against unescorted dating on the grounds that the practice is un-Islamic (Smith-Hefner 2018, 2019). Perhaps more than any other gender-focused campaign, this latter effort achieved significant success with a growing number of Muslim youths declaring their intention to *not* engage in dating prior to marriage. At the same time, however, a no less notable trend in matters of courtship and marriage was the expectation expressed by growing numbers of Muslim women that their husbands conform to new "companionate" models of marital partnership. These models encourage men to be emotionally expressive, conversationally engaging, and supportive of their wife in household chores (Nurmila 2009:33; Smith-Hefner 2019:179). In these as in so many other regards, claims and counter-claims with regard to Muslim gender norms remained contentious in the post-Suharto period, and they were not by any means governed by a single regulatory logic, not least one uniformly "conservative" in its forms.

Fourth and last, the highly varied nature of Muslim gender practices in contemporary Indonesia reminds us that, contrary to all essentializing stereotypes, Muslim normativities and practices with regard to gender and sexuality have always varied over time and space. This variation is pronounced notwithstanding the fact that both issues are matters of central concern in classical Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and ethics (*akhlaq*: see K. Ali 2006; Ayubi 2019; Tucker 1998, 2008; Welchman 2007). More generally, on matters of gender and sexuality as on all else, Islamic normativities vary in practice because they are shaped not just by unchanging textual traditions but by ethical currents that "carry over" (Simon 2014; see Chapter 1) from other spheres of social life. Today some of the most powerful of such carry-over influences include those related to women's participation in higher education, the labor market, and public life.

Drawing on and adjusting Pierre Bourdieu's distinction between "official" and "practical" kinship (Bourdieu 1977:33–8), Michael Peletz has raised an important theoretical point relevant for this chapter's four core points. Peletz observes that one result of the plurality of gender registers found in all societies is that a tension often emerges between official representations of kinship and gender, on one hand, and "practical" kinship and gender on the other. In the present chapter, and building on Peletz and Bourdieu, I refer to "official gender" as those representations that "serve the function of ordering the social world and legitimating that order" (Bourdieu 1977:34). By contrast, practical gender "denotes the uses and representations . . . [of gender] in everyday practical situations which are more oriented toward 'getting things done' than to formal representations" of gender as such (Peletz 1994:140; see also Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). As we shall see, in Indonesia the social changes wrought by "getting things done" in women's education, employment, and marital relations have been far-ranging since the 1980s. The changes have in turn undermined New Order and exclusivist Islamist efforts to promote inegalitarian practices of gender and womanhood.

In the *Nusantara* archipelago that is today Indonesia, some of the getting-things-done realities that have carried over into the practice of Muslim women's identities include the historically high rates of women's participation in agriculture and market trade; the prevalence of bilateral patterns of kinship and matrilocal residency; the rise of modernist varieties of Islamic reform committed to women's education; and, since the 1990s, the growing participation of Muslim women in the professions. The confluence of these social forces has created gender aspirations in tension with gender representations of a starkly inegalitarian nature. The trend has also spurred efforts by Muslim gender reformists to carry over new and more egalitarian gender values into other social domains.

Gender Legacies

Gender matters in modern Indonesia show the clear imprint of evolving entanglements with, on one hand, values deemed Islamic and universal (in the sense of applying to all observant Muslims), and ideals and practices that carry over from Indonesia-specific practices with regard to kinship, marriage, employment, politics, and sociality. As noted in Chapters 2 and 4, the coming of Islam to the archipelago differed from the first waves of conversion in the Middle East because, among other things, local rulers rather than foreign forces played a leading role in the early phases of the religious change. Although in several territories the conversion process came to involve wars between rival local rulers (Ricci 2011:200–15; Ricklefs 2012:12), in most regions conversion to Islam was pioneered by political and economic elites who shared a common ethnicity, language, and gender habitus with their subjects. This high degree of ethnic commonality meant that the first phases of conversion to Islam were not typically marked by a radical rupture with long-established gender practices. No less important, the fact that the first

centuries of Islamization did not see the establishment of a network of madrasas popularizing *fiqh* and other scripturally oriented models of kinship, marriage, and sexuality (Chapter 5) ensured that Islamic legal traditions played a less central role in *Nusantara* Muslims' early understanding of Islam and gender than was the case in many Middle Eastern and South Asian lands.

Even as Indonesians in these early centuries adopted many Muslim traditions of worship and spirituality, then, they preserved much of the existing "infrastructuring" (Ahmed 2016) for gender, kinship, and family. Across most of the archipelago, for example, kinship terminology continued (and continues today) to place as much or even more emphasis on generational differences as on those of a gendered nature. As the Australian anthropologist James Fox has observed, the pattern reflects a concern for "precedence" widespread in the Austronesian societies of Southeast Asia and the western Pacific, and one that tends to mute the elaboration of kin-based social hierarchies along gender lines (Fox 2006a:1–11). In a related linguistic vein, Nancy Smith-Hefner observes,

> Both mother's and father's relatives are referred to using similar kin terms and are addressed with similar terms of address undistinguished as to whether the relationship is through the mother's or father's side. In this system, generation and relative age are often of more significance than gender – which, linguistically speaking, is not always or necessarily marked.
>
> *(Smith-Hefner 2019:73)*

Although a few Muslim Indonesian societies have unilineal descent groups – matrilineal among the Minangkabau, patrilineal (in part) among the Acehnese – the kinship order more widespread in Indonesia, and the variety practiced by ethnic Javanese, Sundanese, Malays, Madurese, Bugis, Betawi, and Buginese (who together comprise two-thirds of Indonesia's population) is a cognatic or bilateral system that eschews lineal reckoning so as to accord equal weight to maternal and paternal relatives. Rather than creating powerful, male-dominated patrilineages, then, bilateralism encourages a flexible reliance on a small number of male and female kin (Karim 1995; Robinson 2009; Schröter 2013). By contrast, across large swaths of the Middle East and South Asia, the centrality of patrilineages in public life buttresses cultures of masculinity in which men regard female relatives' sexuality as a valued resource to be carefully controlled in the interest of family and masculine honor. In Arab societies, the latter pattern is associated with what is known as the *hasham* tradition of honor and modesty, the subject of a celebrated study by the American anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod (Abu-Lughod 1986:105; cf. Ghannam 2015:71–3).

By contrast with the patrilineal model, then, "bilateral systems . . . open up a space for social practices that allow agency to women, especially in comparison to societies practising patrilineal descent and patrivirilocal residence" (Robinson 2009:14). One common feature of bilateralism in many Muslim Indonesian

societies was that the inheritance principles favored in most families eschewed the two-to-one division of shares prescribed in classical Muslim jurisprudence in favor of a pattern which provided more or less equal shares for brothers and sisters. Even among populations like the Acehnese, who officially are patrilineal, many parents opt to transmit the greater portion of parental properties in roughly equal shares to sisters and brothers by "gifting" (*hibah*) parental property prior to an offspring's marriage (Bowen 2003:53–9). In these and other ways, bilateral kinship provides women with the social and economic resources needed to achieve a greater measure of autonomy than is commonly the case in patrilineal systems, where women's access to homesteads, landholdings, and other valuables is mediated through fathers, husbands, and brothers (Robinson 2009; Schröter 2013).

Consistent with this pattern of socioeconomic agency, women in much of the Indonesian archipelago have also long been prominent players in local produce markets (Alexander 1987; Brenner 1998:72–9; Dewey 1962). "In the merchant community, women's value was intimately linked to their economic productivity, which depended on their ability and willingness to engage in trade" (Brenner 1998:76). Historically, and with the notable exception of regions like Aceh (where men figure more prominently in local marketing), men's role in market trade was more pivotal than that of women only in long-distance trade requiring extended absences from home. In Indonesian agriculture, too, there was a strongly gendered pattern to the division of labor, but here too women's labor contributions and income generation were vital for household welfare. In wet-rice growing areas of Java, Sumatra, and Kalimantan, for example, the average labor contribution of women to agriculture (in addition to their household tasks) was fully comparable to that of men (Stoler 1977). As my research in the mountains of East Java in the 1980s showed, dry field (*tegal*) agriculture shows greater variation in the gendered division of labor, but in upland areas of Java and Sumatra women in landowning households typically contribute more than half of labor required for cultivation, all while also playing a central role in the marketing of produce (Hefner 1990). Although the pattern is by no means universal and has changed significantly in urban Muslim households, in many rural families women also took primary responsibility for the household budget (Brenner 1998:140–86; H. Geertz 1961; Smith-Hefner 2019:78).

In matters of sexuality too the Muslim archipelago carried over into contemporary times many distinctive gender legacies. In some parts of the archipelago, local cultures acknowledged (and still today acknowledge) the reality of a third sex (or as among the Bugis, even a fourth) and transgenderism (Graham Davies 2010; Peletz 2009). As Michael Peletz (2009:311) has observed, the pluralism seen in gender and sexuality across Southeast Asia in general, and the Nusantara region in particular, was one of this world area's most distinctive cultural characteristics.[1] Prior to modern times, women's active interest in sexuality within the confines of marriage was also not regarded as aberrant (Watson Andaya 2006:153–63). In contrast to broad segments of the population in South Asia and the Middle East, Muslim families in the Indonesian archipelago never developed a tradition

of female seclusion or confinement, like the much-discussed tradition of *purdah* in South Asia, where the practice is common among both Muslims and Hindus (Watson Andaya 2006:172–8). There were two small exceptions to this latter generalization: aristocrats (*priyayi*) in colonial Java, where the seclusion or "stabling" (*pingitan*) of menstrual-age young women was widespread; and high status *sayyid* families (i.e., families who claim descent from the Prophet Muhammad) in the largely urban Arab Hadhramaut immigrant community, whose numbers grew steadily from the late nineteenth century onward (Abushouk 2007; Slama 2014). Among the broader Muslim public, however, female seclusion was uncommon because women played so vital a role in social and economic life.

Complementarity Without Hierarchy?

Not governed by any single regulatory grand scheme, there were always significant tensions to gender realities in the *Nusantara* region. For example, to the degree that overarching gender ideologies existed at all, they did not foreground ideals of gender equality and/or individual autonomy but tended to emphasize that the relationship of male to female was one of mutuality and complementary. In an overview of gender traditions across Indonesia and Malaysia, the Malaysian anthropologist Wazir Jahan Karim (1995) has observed, "The popular view that women are not the same as men and do different things does not generate a discourse that they are inferior or less important than men." Instead, "differences in power between men and women suggest differences in domains of preference, perceived as complementary rather than hierarchical" (Karim 1995:xiii–xiv; Smith-Hefner 2019:73–4). In much of eastern Indonesia local gender ideologies linked the ideal of gender complementarity to long-established cosmologies of world-making, seeing male and female as an anthropocentric expression of a gendered duality at the heart of the natural and supernatural worlds (Robinson 2021:10–12). In central areas of the Indonesian archipelago, including both Java and Bali, ritual and aesthetic practices showed a no less distinctive variation on this theme of world-making cosmological dualities (Hughes-Freeland 2008:39–40; Peletz 2009:38).

Andrew Beatty's observation with regard to popular mysticism in Banyuwangi (in the far eastern corner of Java) captures the latter theme in its Javanese expression: "the deepest mystery, and the absorbing focus of symbolism, is sexual reproduction. Sex is not only an image of union, but of fertile union" (Beatty 1999:167; cf. Robinson 2009:20). In much the same vein, and writing of pre-Islamic traditions among the Bugis of South Sulawesi, the French historian Christian Pelras describes a worldview

> in which the world was viewed as a polarized entity whose opposed pairs in a generalized system of symbolic equivalences were sky and earth, mountain and sea, rising sun and setting sun, right and left, sun and moon, male and female, life and death.
>
> *(Pelras 1996:47; cf. Hefner 1985:116, 131)*[2]

There were other representations of male and female in Muslim societies across the archipelago, however, including ones in tension with these discourses of complementarity without hierarchy. As Peletz has observed with reference to Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, one of the most pervasive idioms for expressing hierarchical differences between males and females had to do with the categories of "reason" (Ind., Malay, *akal*) and "passion" (Ind., Malay, *nafsu*). Both terms are derived from Arabic (Ar., *nafs* and '*aql*). Both also figure prominently in classical Islamic jurisprudence and virtue ethics (*akhlaq*), albeit with a different semantic valence than is typically the case in the Muslim archipelago (see Ayubi 2019).[3] Peletz notes,

> In many and perhaps all Muslim communities, the term *nafsu* (hereafter "passion") frequently carries derogatory connotations, especially when it is applied to humans. In many (but not all) Muslim communities, moreover, one finds an entrenched, highly elaborated belief that "passion" is more pronounced among women (and females generally) than among men (males).

Peletz goes on to make another important observation, one relevant for a broader understanding of official as well as practical gender realities in Muslim Indonesia. In the course of his Malaysia research, Peletz discovered that, contrary to official commentaries,

> practical representations of gender portray men as much less reliable and trustworthy than women and relatively uncommitted to their wives, children, and other relatives. They also depict men as fond of gambling and alcohol, overly inclined to purchase on credit, prone to running up burdensome debts, and thus less restrained – and in certain respects more impassioned (i.e., having more "passion") – than women. In the practical view, moreover, men are "at fault" in most cases of divorce since, as some of my male informants put it, "they don't follow the rules," are "basically lazy," and "expect to eat for free."
>
> *(Peletz 1994:152; Peletz 2022)*

In her study of Muslim women merchants in the Central Javanese city of Surakarta, anthropologist Suzanne Brenner encountered a similar pattern of gender ambivalence. She discovered that although official representations of women present them as less rational than men, in everyday life many people describe men as less capable of controlling their passions and less reliable in family and business affairs (Brenner 1998:90; cf. Keeler 1987:54). In her research in the 2000s among Islamist students in Yogyakarta, Nancy Smith-Hefner encountered yet another variation on this theme. The well-educated activists among whom she worked did not hesitate to affirm that there were basic differences of nature (*kodrat*) between men and women and that in marital relations the husband should be regarded as the head of the household (Smith-Hefner 2019). At the same time, however,

most middle-class couples were reluctant to justify this role differentiation on the grounds of any differential endowment with regard to reason or passion.

In 2008 and 2009, I conducted interviews with fifty-one individuals (twenty-seven men and twenty-four women) on gender and Muslim ethics in the same Yogyakarta region. Urban middle-class interviewees expressed the same ambivalence that Smith-Hefner has reported. Most viewed men and women as different in a divinely "naturalized" or *kodrat* way, and most were willing to accept the idea that the father should be regarded as the head of the household. But these same interlocutors declined to explain the difference in family roles in terms of innate variation in reason and passion. Indeed, even while affirming basic gender asymmetries, a few of my interviewees commented that the reason-and-passion trope for explaining gender differences was "old fashioned" (*kolot*); several even said the model is "un-Islamic."

However, among the rural residents I interviewed during these same years in a small village southeast of Yogyakarta, the most commonly cited explanation differed from that of my urban middle-class interlocutors. A significant minority – just under half of the men and about one-fourth (five) of the women – cited the reason-and-passion trope, declaring that in their view men had greater reason than women. Equally revealing, however, was that in the course of our ninety-minute interviews, many of these same respondents qualified the opinion they had first offered, saying that after additional reflection on the gender matters we were discussing that they were "less than certain" as to the truth of the reason-and-passion trope. The one consistent exception to this pattern of hesitancy with regarded to gender and rationality was the six interviewees (four men and two women) in the survey who self-identified as salafi (Ind., *salafy*): all of these interviewees subscribed to the gender-differentiated view of reason and passion, and all linked the difference to matters of inborn nature (*kodrat*).

The cumulative weight of the research evidence thus suggests that, just as Boellstorff, van Doorn-Harder, Peletz, Brenner, and Smith-Hefner suggest, representations of masculinity and femininity in Muslim Indonesia show considerable variation and seem to be in the midst of significant change – albeit not trending neatly toward a less gender-differentiated understanding of male and female. If my interview sample from Yogyakarta is at all representative of broader trends, many in Indonesia's educated urban middle class still regard men and women as having different natural endowments and still see the household as internally differentiated in such a way as to make the father best suited to serve as its head (see also Hoesterey and Clark 2012; Rinaldo 2013). But growing numbers of men and women are no longer inclined to explain these differences in terms of any innate or divinely endowed advantage men enjoy in matters of reason. However, and complicating the picture, Muslims in Islamist groupings like the small Salafist community typically reject this less differentiating model, affirming a *kodrat*-based view of reason-based male superiority, and claiming that this difference must be regarded as "official" because it is based on Islamic revelation.

This variation reminds us that gender normativities in contemporary Indonesia are complex in a way that is not at all neatly derivative of unchanging scriptural normativities. Even what some observers might have regarded as the most explicitly "Islamic" of representations – the association of men with "reason" (*akal*) and women with "passion" (*nafsu*) – depart significantly from the understanding of *'aql* and *nafs* developed in the classical (and still widely read) Islamic scholarship of such esteemed medieval scholars as al-Ghazali, Tusi, and Davani. In the classical scholarship, rather than being "feminine" and "negative," *nafs* is seen as an energetic quality of the metaphysical soul that can through spiritual exercises be mobilized for the purposes of ethical and spiritual improvement (Ayubi 2019:13).

Against this already complicated social and historical backdrop, the New Order state attempted to introduce a gender regime that pushed aside any and all nuance on gender matters, in favor of a model of women as devoted and subordinate charges of their fathers and husbands. Not surprisingly, the gender legacies of Indonesia's past and the opportunities for female agency in the present ensured that this gender scheme collided with the reality of women intent on "getting-things-done" and carrying over gender ideals inconsistent with officializing prescriptions.

Femininity Functionalized

The heightened contestation over women and gender in the *Reformasi* period took place against the backdrop of a more contemporary but no less distinctive legacy on matters of women and family, a legacy inherited from the New Order regime (1966–98). This regime discourse was not grounded in or otherwise carried over from Islamic traditions. It was instead authoritarian secularist, much like the regime itself during its first twenty-five years. Julia Suryakusuma has aptly called the gender model "state *ibuism*" or (literally) "state motherism" (Suryakusuma 1996). The central tenet of state ibuism is that a woman's role is first and foremost domestic, as devoted wife and mother, and a dependent rather than an equal partner of her husband (Robinson 2009:189).

As noted previously, the view that a husband is head of the household was not at all unique to the New Order period; it had counterparts in popular culture as well as in the Islamic, Christian, and Hindu traditions operative across colonial and postcolonial Indonesia. However, during the New Order the principle was reinforced and instrumentalized in new ways. For example, it was provided with legal charter in Article 79 of the 1974 law on marriage (Doorn-Harder 2013:57; Rinaldo 2013:45). In that document the husband is officially identified as the household head, and the wife's role is deemed that of being a loyal wife and mother. The ideal of state *ibuism* was also harnessed to more specific state ends. For example, it was invoked in regime narratives that identified the Indonesian nation as a family under the supervisory control of President Suharto, who was portrayed as a benevolent patriarch and the "father of development" (*Bapak pembangun*; see Bourchier 2015).

A related and even more instrumentalized feature of state motherism had to do with the claim that the identification of women with domesticity was not just a matter of social convention but grounded in women's in-born character or *kodrat*. The latter phrase is derived from Arabic term "*qudra*," where it refers to a deep seated and divinely instilled characteristic or capacity, albeit not necessarily of a gendered nature. However, in the Southeast Asian Muslim context, the term is most widely used to refer to gendered aspects of human nature regarded as God-given (Brenner 1998:246–7; Robinson 2009:10, 69; Smith-Hefner 2019:58). Although the regime's use of the term drew on a recognized category of Islamic discourse, then, the construct in its New Order usage was not elaborated on explicitly Islamic lines but portrayed as grounded in Indonesian culture as a whole.

There was an additional, especially tragic dimension to the New Order emphasis on women's *kodrat*-based domesticity, one highlighted in much of the research that has been carried out in the post-Suharto period on the mass killings of 1965–6. In the aftermath of the failed left-wing officers coup the night of September 30, 1965 (see Chapter 2), New Order ideologues alleged that the women's organization linked to the PKI, known by the acronym Gerwani (*Gerakan Wanita Indonesia*, Indonesian women's movement), had played a central role in the sexual torture and execution of the six army generals kidnapped and eventually killed the first night of the coup (Wieringa 2002; Wieringa and Katjasungkana 2019; Roosa 2006). Six generals had indeed been arrested and killed by coup-based forces, but the allegation of torture by Gerwani activities was a fabrication. Over the next eight months, this narrative was invoked by the civilian militias participating in the army-backed arrests and killings of communists to justify horrific acts of violence against Gerwani women (Robinson 2018:130–1, 153, 167; Wieringa and Katjasungkana 2019:2–3, 25–6). The allegations were also part of the narrative New Order propagandists invoked to justify their claims that women's activism was aberrant because antithetical to women's "natural" roles as loving daughters, mothers, and wives.

Even at the height of the New Order, however, the influence of this ostensibly hegemonic ideal was anything but totalizing. In part this had to do with the fact that, as we have seen, gender discourses of a practical or "getting-things-done" nature had carried over from varied social fields, including female-friendly kinship terminology, residence patterns, inheritance practices, and the household economy. These social traits had long provided Indonesian women with significant agency, notwithstanding what regime or exclusivist Islamist discourses might have to say.

Adding to this complexity, and as Rinaldo (2013:45) has observed, the New Order regime's official policies toward women were at times contradicted by state developmental programs that had their own ways of "getting things done." Many of the latter had the unintended effect of expanding opportunities for women in education, employment, and lifestyle relationships. In other words, the New Order state created practical realities at variance with the state's own officializing gender discourse.

One of the most powerful drivers for this discontinuity between official ideology and practical realities had to do with education. From its early years, and to the credit of the New Order's ministry of education, one of the key policy ambitions of the New Order state had been to expand access to general education for the entire population. In 1973, the government announced a program to build a primary school in every one of the country's villages, and over the next twenty years it constructed more than 100,000 schools (Bjork 2005). In the late 1970s and 1980s I was conducting dissertation research in rural areas of upland East Java, and I witnessed first-hand the joy parents experienced at being able to send their daughters as well as sons to recently opened grade schools (Hefner 1990).

Parental enthusiasm for their daughters' as well as sons' education was an equally striking feature of the 200 interviews on religion and family matters that I did with parents in villages to the north and south of Yogyakarta between 1999 and 2016. However, by those years one thing differed: whereas in my East Javanese villages a generation earlier only a handful of youth went on to attend high school, in the Yogyakarta villages the *majority* of youth had done so, and about 30% of parents had at least one child who had attended or was attending college. During our interview discussions I was equally struck by the fact that I rarely encountered voices suggesting that education was more important for boys than it was girls. Years earlier in East Java, and when speaking of junior and senior high school–age youth, a few village traditionalists had suggested it was best to keep sexually mature girls close to home rather than in school, especially if attending school at some distance from the family home. In Yogyakarta in the 2000s, the only social group who consistently suggested adolescent girls should not go to college were Salafists (see Chapter 4). However, even in this group just under one-half of the respondents indicated that college education for young women was allowed if approved by male guardians.

In 1984 the government mandated six years of compulsory schooling; it extended the figure to nine years in 1994 (since 2013, twelve years are mandated). Rates of educational achievement soon showed the influence of these government policies and the new gendered aspirations they fostered. Between 1965 and 2000, female literacy rates rose from 32% to 87%. Among young women in their early 20s, literacy rates had reached 96% by 2010 and were now for the first time fully on par with their male counterparts.

A no less striking pattern was seen in data on "school life expectancy," which UNESCO defines as the average number of years a person of school entrance age can expect to spend in school over the course of her or his lifetime. In 1972, the school life expectancy of a boy beginning school was 7.4 years; for a girl, the figure was 5.7. By 1993, the figure had risen to 10.2 years for boys and 9.3 for girls. By 2000, the gender gap had narrowed further with a school life expectancy of 10.8 years for boys and 10.4 for girls. By 2018, twenty years into the *Reformasi* era, school life expectancy for boys was 13.5 years and for girls an astonishing 16.7 years (see UIS.UNESCO 2020). By comparison, in 2018, school life expectancy

in the United States was sixteen years for boys and seventeen years for girls. In the United Kingdom (the country with the longest school life expectancy) the figures were 18 and 20, respectively. The figures in the Middle East's best-performing Muslim-majority country, Iran, were fifteen years for both sexes.

Viewing girls' education from another statistical angle, in 1973 only 35.9% of students in secondary education were female. By 1993, their proportion had risen to 44.1%. By 2000, young women constituted a full 48.5% of secondary school students. By 2018 the figure had grown to 49.2%. The proportion of females in tertiary education showed an even more striking upward trend. In 1973, young women made up only 27.8% of all college students. By 1993, their numbers had grown to 39.5%; by 2000, they were 46.4%. By 2018 young women's share of higher education had reached a full 52.4%, exceeding the proportion for males. By way of comparison, the figures from the United States are 43.3% (1973), 55.0% (1993), 55.8% (2000), and 56.4% (2018).

Gender changes in educational achievement during and after the New Order period were paralleled by no less significant developments in women's employment outside the household. From the early New Order period to today, the percentage of the Indonesian population employed in agriculture declined from 54% in 1965 to 49% in 1990 and 27.7% today. Even as the percentage of population active in agriculture declined, women's rates of participation in extra-familial employment outside of agriculture grew steadily, allowing Indonesia to achieve some of the highest rates of female labor force participation in the Muslim-majority world. The figure stood at 53% in 2019. The latter figure is just several points below the rate for women's labor force participation in the United States in 2018 (58%), and two to three times the rate seen in Middle Eastern countries like Egypt (22%) and Jordan (15%).

Notwithstanding New Order identifications of women as homebodies rather than income-earners, then, and notwithstanding what some have described as the "conservative turn" in Indonesian Islam after 1999 (Chapter 4), the majority of women in Indonesia showed little of the hesitation with regard to employment that the anthropologist Fida Adely (2012) has so vividly described among educated Muslim women in Jordan and the Arab Middle East. In short, in Indonesia, education has been a powerful catalyst for women's agency and empowerment.

Nationalism and Muslim Women's Organizations

Women's participation in modern voluntary civic organizations has been another driver for gender change in Indonesia, albeit in a complex and nonlinear way. To understand that influence again requires a brief review of the history of women's involvement in mass-based civic and social welfare organizations. As Danielle Lussier and Steven Fish observed in a 2012 article, Indonesia is unusual among lower-middle income countries in that it has an "extraordinary levels of civic engagement" – as measured by average number of memberships householders have

in civic and social welfare organizations (political parties, community associations, religious groups, etc.; see Lussier and Fish 2012:74). Indonesians' levels of civic membership are the highest among Southeast Asian countries and also significantly higher than those of their counterparts in Middle Eastern countries. No less significant, and entirely unlike their counterparts in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, and Turkey, Indonesian women's rates of participation in religious associations and meetings is "virtually identical" to the high rates of participation found among their male counterparts. Together these circumstances help to sustain an "unusually vibrant associational life" (Lussier and Fish 2012:70) – and one in which women figure prominently.

However remarkable this pattern of women's public participation, it has not prevented bitter public contention over Indonesian women's proper public roles. The severity of the contention again underscores how the gender normativities shaping women's lives are not a direct effect of unchanging scriptural normativities or a single regulatory logic but complex and evolving interaction across social fields.

As Robinson (2009:34) has noted, and as was also the case in the Muslim Middle East (Badran 2009), the aspiration for a new deal for women in general and Muslim women in particular emerged not in the aftermath of the country's national awakening but in tandem with it in the early decades of the twentieth century. This shift was itself related to broader changes in the political and cultural landscape of late colonial and independent Indonesia, including in particular what Feener (2007:13) has described as the rise of the three "complexes" – publishing, mass education, and voluntary associations. Among Indonesian Muslims, these developments contributed to the consolidation of a new epistemology of religious knowledge "liberated from the closed circles of traditionalist religious scholars" (ibid.). It was part and parcel too of the creation of new public sphere marked by the heightened participation of actors educated in Islamic schools and buoyed by new understandings of Islamic ethics and society (see also Bowen 1993:13; Eickelman and Salvatore 2002). Although Muslim men were the first to feel the impact of these changes, soon women did as well.

As we have also seen, the first movements for Indonesian national awakening arose in the 1910s. By the end of the decade, the movements had mobilized hundreds of thousands of followers across the central territories in the archipelago. Muslim-based groups like the Association of Muslim Merchants (*Sarekat Dagang Islam*, est. 1911) and its more militantly anti-colonial successor, the Islamic Association (*Sarekat Islam*, est. 1918; see Ricklefs 2007; Shiraishi 1990), were among the first to develop a mass base. During these same early years, mass education and the dawn of the nationalist and movements combined to give rise to what Robinson has described as the "consciousness of the political category of 'woman'" (Robinson 2009:34). The Islamic and secular nationalist wings of the women's movements agreed on many core issues, especially those related to women's education and family welfare. However, on the question of whether the machinery of state should be used to reform "private" family life, the two groups parted ways. Although in

1930 a splinter group in the Muslim women's movement briefly joined with its secular nationalist counterparts in calling for reform to religious laws on marriage, divorce, polygamy, and inheritance (see Blackburn 2008:87–8), most Muslim women's groups opposed the proposal. However, the ethical currents in play here were more complicated than first meets the eye, as again illustrated in the experience of Indonesia's largest Muslim modernist association, the Muhammadiyah.

Muhammadiyah's founder, Ahmad Dahlan, had established a women's section in 1919, just seven years after the main organization's establishment. He assigned leadership of the organization, which came to be known as Aisyiyah, to his wife. The section's initial aims were modest, aiming to promote a pious and learned profession of the faith among women (van Doorn-Harder 2006). By the 1920s, however, the women's wing had extended its range of program priorities to include women's education, family health, and journalism. Consistent with the Muhammadiyah's middle-class and entrepreneurial ethos, Aisyiyah also sought to curb Muslim families' participation in expensive ritual festivities, especially those that for Javanese accompany marriage and male circumcision (Doorn-Harder 2013:60; Peacock 1978:44). The women's organization also promoted the adoption of the head scarf, which at this stage in Indonesian history consisted of the loose-fitting head covering known as the *kerudung* rather than the more encompassing, under-the-chin covering worn by the majority of Muslim women today (and known in Indonesian as the *jilbab*; see Brenner 1998; Smith-Hefner 2007a). Like its traditionalist rival, the Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah also enforced gender-segregated seating at meetings where both sexes were present, often using a curtain (*tabir*) to separate the two seating areas.

As Blackburn (2008:88, 2007) has noted, in the 1920s and 1930s, both the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (which did not establish a separate women's wing until 1945) "held profoundly conservative views about women's place." It is important to note, however, that conservatism was more apparent with regard to women's involvement in national politics than it was in matters related to women's health, education, and public activism. More self-consciously anti-colonial Muslim groups, like the Indonesian Islamic Association Party (*Partai Sarekat Islam Indonesia*, PSII), encouraged women members to play a direct role in political affairs, including speaking before mixed-gender audiences. At a PSII conference in Yogyakarta in 1930, "representatives of the women's branch spoke about raising women to a position of equality with men, and about polygyny and marriage laws" (Blackburn 2008:87). In 1940, PSII women published a commemorative volume in which they lamented what they described as the male leadership's indifference to women's concerns (ibid.:88).

The institutionally independent women's wing of the Muhammadiyah, Aisyiyah was an ardent proponent of women's education and family health. The organization nonetheless rejected PSII appeals for reforms to marriage laws. Indeed, Aisyiyah's pronouncements on marriage made clear it had two priorities with regard to gender ethics: first, that a woman's first duty lies in the home and child-rearing (van

Doorn-Harder 2006; Wieringa 2002:124); and second, that Muslim women should decline to join with secular nationalists in any campaign to rewrite laws on marriage and divorce (Wieringa 2002:67; Robinson 2009:42).

Public statements aside, there was considerable evidence of ethical ambivalence on these matters even among the Aisyiyah rank and file. In her *Sexual Politics in Indonesia* (2002), Wieringa reports that, although Aisyiyah leaders refused to join in anti-polygyny campaigns "because the Qur'an accepted it, in private leaders were often unhappy about this" (Wieringa 2002:67). One elderly Aisyiyah leader recalled in interview with Wieringa that "[p]ersonally I have never agreed with polygyny. I would never have allowed it. But it is a religious rule, so what can we say against it?" (ibid.; see also Doorn-Harder 2006, 2013).

A member of the Aisyiyah national executive and chair of the National Commission on Violence against Women (and a collaborator in an earlier research project with me; see Qibtiyah 2021), Alimatul Qibtiyah's recent research on Aisyiyah has underscored this latter point. She observes that already in the 1930s a plurality of Aisyiyah women insisted that polygamy was *not* the ideal family form. Although the practice was not to be forbidden outright (because of its authorization in Islamic scripture), the Aisyiyah leadership made clear that polygamy was allowed only under strictly defined and rare circumstances. However, notwithstanding their own view, gender reformists in Aisyiyah and the Muhammadiyah were unable to win over the national Muslim leadership to their position. In elite Nahdlatul Ulama circles, the practice of polygamy was tolerated and even promoted by a few leading kyai (Feillard and Doorn-Harder 2013). This pattern remains the case to this day.[4]

From the late 1920s onward, then, these differences undercut the ability of the Muslim and secular nationalist wings of the Indonesian women's movement to develop an operating consensus on religion-based gender matters. The deadlock was starkly apparent at the first all-Indonesia Women's Congress, which opened in Yogyakarta, Java, on December 22, 1928. At that meeting, Muslim women joined with secular nationalists to appeal to the colonial government to require that, in the Islam-regulated marriage ceremony (*nikah*), the presiding official explain the procedures for conditional divorce, whereby woman have the right to initiate divorce proceedings. In Indonesia today, this arrangement is known as *taklik talak* and stipulates that during the official wedding ceremony husbands must be informed of the circumstances under which a wife can initiate divorce. This fleeting collaboration aside, later congresses foundered on secular nationalist appeals for additional legislation to restrict polygamy and expand women's rights in divorce and inheritance. As Qibtiyah observed in discussion with me in January 2019,

> It wasn't that many women in Aisyiyah didn't object to polygamy. Many did even then; the majority do today. But in those early years, Muslim women in groups like Aisyiyah felt that these were scripturally regulated matters, and so they couldn't be resolved in meetings with secular nationalist women. Their resolution required religiously-based scholarship and discussion.[5]

Meanwhile, during the middle decades of the twentieth century, the struggle over family law took a back seat to a growing dispute over the place of religion in the new nation. At independence most of the new republic's civil law and court protocols were carried over from the Dutch colonial period with existing laws and judicial procedures in place. This meant that the Republic continued to recognize the operation of the Islamic court system that had been formally established by a Dutch Royal Decree in 1882. Mischaracterized as "priests' councils" (*priesterraden*) by the Dutch, the tribunals were actually Islamic family courts (Bowen 2003:49; Lev 1972). Most of their case load had to do with divorce and inheritance (although jurisdiction in matters of inheritance was moved back into civil courts in 1937). The tribunals were presided over by judges and a senior religious official appointed by native officials. The boards had no powers of enforcement other than appeal for an executory decree from a local civil court. All these details reflected the "reception theory" emphasized by Dutch officials, according to which Islamic legal traditions were used "only insofar as they had been 'received' into the region's custom" (Bowen 2003:49). And as far as most Dutch officials were concerned, the depth of reception in most Muslim communities was paper-thin indeed.

Although in independent Indonesia the new Ministry of Justice had at first pressed for the absorption of the Islamic tribunals into the national court system (Lev 1972:63–75), Muslim parties successfully mobilized to maintain the autonomy of the Islamic legal system. Muslim parties also succeeded at repositioning Muslim courts under the Ministry of Religion rather than the more secularist-dominated Ministry of Justice. In 1951 the parliament passed a statute that authorized the extension of Islamic courts beyond their area of original operation in Java and Madura, making their territorial jurisdiction coextensive with the civil court system (Cammack 2007:149). On legal disputes relating to marriage, divorce, and inheritance, then, Muslim Indonesians were supposed to go to Islamic courts, while non-Muslims were to go to civil courts. Both groups were required to register their marriages and divorces in the local office of religious affairs. The degree to which the Islamic tribunals actually applied Islamic law in cases of divorce and inheritance varied by region, reflecting the continuing influence of customary law (Ind., *adat*) in different ethnic communities.

With the exception of these matters of marriage and divorce, in both non-domestic civil and criminal law, Islamic legal traditions had an only modest place. Apostasy was not criminalized, and none of the harsher penalties associated with *hudud* law on matters like adultery and highway robbery were recognized (see Chapter 7). More generally, religious freedom was constitutionally affirmed (Chapter 3; see also Butt and Lindsey 2012) but managed in a manner modeled on not a U.S.-style wall of separation (see Kuru 2009) but the Dutch tradition of accommodating society's varied cultural "pillars" (*verzuilingen*; Ind., *aliran*). Among other things, the arrangement meant that the state provided significant financial support to those religious communities it formally recognized (see Chapter 3).

During the 1950s and 1960s, Muslim parties pressed for a more extensive implementation of shariah law, and the issue became a point of counter-mobilization for the PNI and the PKI (see Chapter 2). Soon Indonesian politics descended into a zero-sum competition for control of the state. During the heyday of parliamentary politics in the 1950s, the main political parties "competed fiercely for influence in every sphere of life and on a round-the-clock basis" (Anderson 1983b:487). The political process was centrifugal and system-challenging, and there was "little acceptance of common fundamentals" (Feith 1963:316).

There was a gender dimension to this loss of "common fundamentals." During these years, the PKI's women's organization, Gerwani, grew rapidly, reaching three million members in the early 1960s, significantly larger than any of its Muslim rivals. Ironically, however, as the PKI grew and the Muslim-communist rivalry intensified, Gerwani's commitment to women's issues slackened. In the 1950s, Gerwani had aligned itself with other secular nationalist organizations to oppose child marriage and polygamy; it also called for legal reforms restricting a husband's right to unilateral divorce (Wieringa 2002:238). However, Indonesia's communist movement had its own gender ambivalences: "opposition to polygyny brought Gerwani into conflict with the male PKI leadership, many of whom were polygamous" (Robinson 2009:56). A related tension soured Gerwani's relationship with President Sukarno. In 1954, the president offended many of his own women supporters by taking a second wife, over the very public objections of his first wife. During these same years, the president regularly dismissed feminism as divisive, insisting that socialist revolution was the only way to abolish gender inequalities (Wieringa 2002:47, 116). For these and other reasons, and notwithstanding the shared commitment of Muslim and secularist women's groups to women's education and welfare, any hope of reaching a new national consensus on reforming Indonesian marriage laws faded.

As we have seen (Chapter 2), the rivalry between Muslim and Communist organizations took a tragic turn in the aftermath of an attempted left-wing officers' coup on the night of September 30, 1965. The coup was supported by at least some figures in the communist leadership (Robinson 2018:69–81; cf. Roosa 2006:221). However, the party's rank and file were uninformed and woefully unprepared for the bloody campaign that followed. Over the weeks that followed, anti-communist army generals purged their ranks of communist sympathizers, mounted a propaganda campaign against the PKI leadership, and set out with civilian vigilantes to round up and execute communist activists. The largest civilian militias were those associated with the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. As in Hindu Bali, however, the armed forces also made common cause with anti-communist youth from other religious communities (Robinson 1995, 2018; Young 1990; cf. Hefner 1990).

Over the next few years, the New Order regime promoted a gender ideology that defined a woman's place as in the home and subordinate to her husband and justified that formulation on the basis of women's ostensible in-born characteristics (*kodrat*). This repressively domesticating gender ideal was supposed to serve as a

model for women's roles throughout the New Order era. However, as with so many of the New Order regime's public ambitions, this state-mandated, "official" gender register was to unable to define and dominate the practical changes in women's roles and self-understandings set in motion, ironically enough, by the New Order's developmental programs.

The "conservative turn" on matters of gender and sexuality seen after Indonesia's return to democracy after 1998, then, took place against the backdrop of New Order legacies of authoritarianism and gendered inequality. However, in one important respect the new gender field differed: Rather than invoking the New Order's discourse of repressive secular nationalism, the new proponents of gender inequality claimed that their gender ideals were grounded in the Qur'an and Sunna of the Prophet. In formulating their appeal in this manner, this neo-patriarchal Islamism ran squarely up against the scripturally based discourses of Muslim feminists and the proponents of women's empowerment and gender equality in groups like Aisyiyah (van Doorn-Harder 2006, 2013; Qibtiyah 2021). In other words, it was with gender as it was with regard to citizenship and democracy in *Reformasi* Indonesia: the conflict of interpretations demonstrated that Muslims' ethical and legal traditions reflect not unchanging scriptural truths but an evolving and deeply contingent plurality of discursive practices.

Muslim Feminism Reborn

Notwithstanding the inegalitarian quality of New Order gender ideologies, by the early 1990s – just a generation after the New Order regime's suppression of all forms of women's activism – Indonesia had developed one of the world's largest Muslim feminist movements (Feillard and Madinier 2006; Feillard and Doorn-Harder 2013; Rinaldo 2013; Robinson 2009; Schröter 2013). No less remarkable, far more than had been the case for first-generation women's activists in the 1920s and 1930s, this second-generation Muslim feminism took aim squarely at the reformation of Islamic legal traditions on matters relevant to women (Doorn-Harder 2006; Qibtiyah 2019; Robinson 2009).

How was this possible? As noted earlier in this chapter, a key influence on the new Muslim women's movement had to do with the far-reaching changes in women's education and employment made possible by New Order development programs. Another, specifically Islamic influence had to do with ongoing changes in Islamic education. Over the course of the New Order period, there was a steady growth in private and state-supported Islamic schooling, which today educates about 15% of the student population (Chapter 5; Hefner 2009). No less remarkably, by the late 1990s, the proportion of young women comprising the *madrasa* student body had grown to over one-half of the total enrollment (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:68–9).

Young women's enrollment in the country's prestigious state Islamic University system (known by the acronym, UIN-IAIN) at first lagged behind that in higher

education generally. In the early 1980s, women were about 30% of the student body at these colleges and universities; by the 2000s, however, they were just under one-half. In post-graduate programs, their numbers lagged more significantly. At the two most prestigious State Islamic Universities (the Jakarta Hidayatullah and the Yogyakarta Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University), women formed only 3% of the student body in 1988 and 20% in 1998 (Jabali and Jamhari 2002:47; Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007:172). Today the number of women students exceeds men at these and eleven of the other eighteen state Islamic universities (see Feillard and Doorn Harder 2013:145).

The consequence of these changes in the educational and employment fields was that, by the late 1980s on, a theologically-articulate generation of Muslim feminists was arriving on the national scene. As in much of the Muslim world (Badran 2009; Mir-Hosseini 2015), the social profile of the new Muslim feminism differed from that of the first generation of women activists in the 1920s and 1930s. The latter had emerged in the context of the anti-colonial struggles and was tied both organizationally and ideologically to mass-based nationalist organizations. As with the PKI's Gerwani or the Muhammadiyah's Aisyiyah, however, the interests of these women's organizations were often subordinated to those of a male-led mass organization. No less important, although some Muslim women activists expressed personal reservations about Islamic legal rules for polygyny and divorce, most lacked the legal or exegetical training to challenge these rules on scriptural grounds (see van Doorn-Harder 2006).

This was the critical difference with the Muslim feminists of the 1990s. The latter had both the education and the aspiration to work through gendered aspects of Islamic ethico-legal traditions "from within" (see Chapters 1–3, this volume). Many of the second-generation activists had family ties to mass-based Muslim organizations, including Nahdlatul Ulama's Muslimat and Muhammadiyah's Aisyiyah and Nasyiah. However, as both Qibtiyah (2019, 2021) and van Doorn Harder (2006) have emphasized, the main pathway to the new Muslim feminism was by way of small study circles and nongovernmental organizations engaged with new international currents of Islamic feminist thought and preoccupied with formulating a scripturally defensible reform of Islamic law on matters related to women and gender.

The fact that second-generation Muslim feminism emerged from study circles and NGOs preoccupied with Islamic legal questions is, of course, not unique to Indonesia. The situation was similar in much of the Arab Middle East (Mir-Hosseini 2015; Welchman 2007) and in neighboring Malaysia (Anwar 2001; Basarudin 2016). In all of these examples, the new Muslim feminism saw small circles of well-educated and religiously observant women working through Islamic sources to carry over values of equality and gender dignity into their reading of the Qur'an, the Sunna of the Prophet, and jurisprudence (*fiqh*) (Feillard and van Doorn-Harder 2013; Rinaldo 2013).[6] What was unusual about Indonesia's Muslim feminists was that so many of them had also graduated from institutions of higher

Islamic learning supported by the very same New Order state that had promoted socially repressive models of female domesticity. As the Muhammadiyah scholar, Siti Syamsiyatun (2008:144) has observed, the state Islamic educational system (UIN/IAIN) "has become a major source for women's religious empowerment." Indeed, as both Rinaldo and Robinson have demonstrated, the ranks of both Muslim and secular feminist organizations were disproportionately swelled by graduates from the country's State Islamic university system (Rinaldo 2013; Robinson 2009).

Two other institutional developments figured centrally in the emergence of second-generation Muslim feminists. In the late 1990s, and with the financial support of the Jakarta office of the Asia Foundation, four IAINs developed "Women's Studies Centers" (*Pusat Studi Wanita*). These institutes launched courses, speaker seminars, and policy studies on gender issues (Qibtiyah 2021). Some of the most prominent among these centers' faculty were provided with scholarships to pursue graduate study in disciplines deemed relevant for furthering women's studies, including law, Islamic studies, and sociology. During these same years, faculty at the Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta developed a new curriculum for civic education that combined the study of Islamic ethics with curricular segments on democracy, civil society, and human rights, including women's rights (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner 2007; Hefner 2009). In 2003, the program was implemented across the entire state Islamic college and university system (Jackson and Bahrissalim 2007; White and Anshor 2008).

These educational trends were complemented by important shifts in the country's two main mass-based organizations. As we have seen, in the 1980s, the Nahdlatul Ulama had come under the leadership of Abdurrahman Wahid, the charismatic grandson of one of early twentieth-century Indonesia's most distinguished traditionalist scholars (Barton 2002; Feillard and Madinier 2006). In the mid-1990s, Wahid had become a leader in the growing democracy movement (cf. Bush 2009). Seventeen months after Suharto's ouster, in October 1999, Wahid was elected president.

Wahid was a well-known supporter of women's rights, and his wife, Sinta Nuriyah Abdurrahman Wahid, was a nationally prominent Muslim feminist in her own right. I first made the acquaintance of Ibu Nuriyah in the early 2000s, when she led a national campaign to introduce anti-violence and gender-equity programs into the Islamic school (*pesantren*) curriculum (see also van Doorn-Harder 2006:37). A network of NU-linked nongovernmental organizations was also active in the development of a gender-equitable fiqh, which drew on classical jurisprudence to provide critical arguments in support of reproductive rights and gender equality. The founding director of the Center for Pesantren and Societal Development (*Pusat Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat*; P3M), Masdar Masudi, was a leading theorist in the movement (Sciortino, Natsir, and Mas'udi 1996). So too was Syafiq Hasyim, a classically trained scholar who went on to earn a Ph.D. in Germany and who has continued to play a leading role in the progressive wing of the Muslim community (see Hasyim 2014, 2021).

Notwithstanding these developments, the gender-reform coalition eventually faltered. After Wahid's departure from the organization in 1999, the successor NU leadership – pressed by traditionalist scholars in the provinces – balked at moving forward with the Wahid era programs of gender "mainstreaming." NU has always been a complex federation of *pesantren*-based ulama, and even in the heyday of the democracy movement in the 1990s a large portion of the regional leadership remained wary of the efforts of gender reformists like Wahid, Sinta Nuriyah, and Masdar Mas'udi. From 2001 onward, an anti-Wahid faction in NU organized a successful campaign to take the national organization in a less reform-minded direction, and rolling back gender reforms was at the top of its agenda (Bruinessen 2013b; Feillard and Madinier 2006; Lukens-Bull 2005).

The situation within Indonesia's other mass-based Muslim organization, the Muhammadiyah, showed a similar pattern of gender- and pluralist progressivism on the part of a vanguard leadership in the 1990s, followed by pushback from the provincial membership in the 2000s. From 1995 to 1998, the Muhammadiyah had been under the leadership of Amien Rais (1944–), an outspoken critic of the Suharto regime who played a pivotal role in the 1997–8 democracy movement. Although he was (and is all the more today) seen as exclusivist on questions of non-Muslims, Rais oversaw the appointment of outspoken theological reformists to Muhammadiyah's council on Islamic thought and renewal (*Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid*), with the support of prominent Muhammadiyah pluralists like Syafii Maarif (1935–2022) and Amin Abdullah (b. 1953; see Amin Abdullah 2017, 2020). Most notable was the 1995 appointment of a leading Muhammadiyah feminist, Siti Ruhaini Dzuhayatin (b. 1963), to the Tarjih council (see Dzuhayatin 2001, 2015). Over the next few years she and the Muhammadiyah intellectual Amin Abdullah (who became rector of the Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University in Yogyakarta) were unrelenting in their efforts to encourage the organization to develop gender-sensitive training programs. In 2017, President Joko Widodo recruited Dzuhayatin to his cabinet as a special assistant on Muslim and women's affairs.

As with NU, however, the heady reform of the early post-Suharto era soon faced an anti-inclusivist backlash (Chapter 4; Bruinessen 2013b; Burhani 2013b, 2013c; Sebastian, Hasyim, Arifianto 2021). The first hints of trouble became visible in the Muhammadiyah in the early 2000s, when regional branches signaled their unhappiness with the national leadership's mandating of affirmative action programs for women attending national meetings. At the forty-fifth national congress in Malang, East Java in 2005, which I attended, officials from several districts defied the Executive Board by refusing to send at least one woman representative from each district, as the board – at the urging of the Aisyiyah leadership – had requested (Dewi 2008:171). As she explained to me in December 2005, Ruhaini and several other Muhammadiyah women, along with almost all of the male reformist leadership, were also voted out of office (Syamsiyatun 2008:158–60; Burhani 2013b). To many observers, the outcome showed that the demand for gender equity in the organization "is still an elite-centered issue" (Dewi 2008:179). My own interviews

with Ruhaini, Abdul Munir Mulkhan, and Din Syamsuddin in Yogyakarta during these years indicated that gender issues were but one among several developments to which anti-liberals in Muhammadiyah objected. Their core objection had to do with what they regarded as the excessive influence of "westernizing" and "liberal" currents in Muhammadiyah ranks (cf. Burhani 2013b; Kersten 2015). But the collateral damage for the proponents of a gender equitable approach to Islamic ethics was no less serious.

Family Law Reform Rebuffed

It was in this climate of escalating rivalries between progressive Muslims and gender reformists, on one hand, and exclusivist Muslims on the other, that Muslim feminists launched their boldest attempt at legal reform – only to see the effort fail. The initiative was the release in October 2004 of a draft bill known as the "Counter Legal Draft" (CLD). The draft was put forward to revise sections of the Compilation of Islamic Law used in the country's Islamic courts for matters of marriage, divorce, and inheritance (Mulia and Cammack 2007; Lindsey 2012:69–101). The CLD was prepared by a seven-member team of Islamic legal scholars under the leadership of Siti Musdah Mulia (b. 1958), a professor at the Hidayatullah State Islamic University in Jakarta and a special assistant to the Minister of Religion (see Musdah Mulia 2005; and Musdah Mulia and Cammack 2007). The recipient of several prestigious international awards (including in 2007 the U.S. government's International Women of Courage Award), Mulia was born in Sulawesi into a traditionalist Muslim family and received her early education in a *pesantren* boarding school. Known for her expertise in Islamic jurisprudence as well as her staunch support of women's rights, freedom for religious minorities, and (in recent years) LGBTQ rights, Mulia was recruited by the Ministry of Religion in 2001 to lead a "Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming." I first met and interviewed Mulia six months after her appointment, when she and her working-group colleagues were still brightly confident about the prospects for their proposed gender reforms.

The timing seemed right. As we have seen (Chapter 2), the period from 1999 to 2002 was the peak of democratic and feminist activism in post-Suharto Indonesia. Revivalists and Islamists, including those in militia groups like the FPI (Chapter 4; Jahroni 2004; Wilson 2008), had not yet finished putting in place a national network. Abdurrahman Wahid was president (through July 23, 2001). Under Wahid's leadership the Ministry for the Empowerment of Women moved to implement a series of gender-equitable reforms. In 2001, in particular, the Ministry announced a national policy of "zero tolerance" for violence against women. The policy's action plan singled out several provisions from the Compilation of Islamic Law as discriminatory (Musdah Mulia and Cammack 2007:133). Mulia's team also argued that some clauses in the compilation were in violation of international human rights conventions to which Indonesia was a signatory.

At first the CLD enjoyed the support of high-ranking officials in the Ministry of Religion. However, in a not-for-attribution interview, one ministerial aide told me that from the beginning of the drafting process they had worried that some elements in the proposed changes were destined to generate a firestorm of opposition not just from exclusivist Islamists but from mainline Muslim scholars as well. In fact, even prominent scholars of Islamic law in the West were surprised by the boldness of the CLD reforms. The Australia-based scholar of Islamic jurisprudence, M.B. Hooker, described the CLD as "a surprising document which . . . absolutely rejects the established principles of *fiqh* in favour of a purely secular scheme of family law" (Hooker 2008:25).

Mulia and her team, however, told me that they took strong exception to the characterization of their approach as "secular." As she later wrote in an article with the legal scholar, Mark Cammack, she was convinced that the CLD "embraces the . . . Qur'anic commitment to equality and freedom in a thoroughgoing and uncompromising way" (Mulia and Cammack 2007:128). In these and other statements, Mulia justified the reform initiative by drawing on a method of ethico-legal reasoning widespread among Muslim legal reformers in modern times: citing the "higher aims of the shariah" (*maqasid al-shariah*) to relativize and displace long-established fiqh norms so as to carry over and integrate modern democratic ideals of equality and social justice into new Islamic norms (Hallaq 2011; Kamali 2008a, 2008b). More specifically, Mulia argued that "the principle of the equality of human beings before God" flows from the core Islamic principle of God's unicity (*tawhid*). Mulia's ethical reasoning offers one more striking example of a carryover (Simon 2014) from one domain of ethical practice – modern notions of human rights and inclusive citizenship – into the heart of Islamic legal reasoning (see Chapter 7).

Notwithstanding these appeals, five of the CLD's proposals proved controversial and ultimately played a role in the draft legislation's being withdrawn. The proposals included the draft's outright ban on polygamy, its legalization of interreligious marriages (forbidden under the existing Compilation of Islamic Law), its elimination of the requirement that a woman be represented by a male guardian (*wali nikah*) in the Islamic marriage ceremony, its equalization of inheritance shares for sons and daughters, and its stipulation that marital disobedience (*nusyuz*) is a moral failing for which husbands as well as wives can be faulted. All of these provisions are at variance with the Compilation of Islamic law used in Indonesia since 1991. All were also consistent with progressive reforms to classical Islamic jurisprudence promoted by Muslim feminists in other nations of the world (see Mir-Hosseini 2015, 2022).

In 2005, I collaborated with an Indonesian researcher, Laode Arham, to carry out interviews on these proposed reforms with eighty Islamic scholars in Jakarta, West Java, and Yogyakarta. All interviewees were scholars active in either Muhammadiyah or Nahdlatul Ulama. The survey found that even in these mainline organizations support for the CLD reform was weak (about 15% of the total),

although a significant plurality of respondents agreed with what they described as the "spirit" of at least some of its provisions. Especially with regard to the proposals to ban polygamy and formally equalize inheritance for sons and daughters, the overwhelming majority of scholars strongly objected to the CLD. Other aspects of the draft law, including the proposals to do away with the male guardian (*wali nikah*) in marriage ceremonies and to allow interreligious marriage, were rejected by some 90% of our interviewees. Although this was a small sample and opportunistic rather than fully randomized, the findings seemed consistent with the general opinion I encountered in conversations conducted over the next several years with some two hundred Muslim scholars – women as well as men. In short, the proposed CLD reforms amounted to a high-stakes gamble by a small circle of established scholars to replace existing *fiqh* traditions with a contextual, *maqasid*-based program premised on the notion that "the purpose and goal of Qur'anic text . . . is the eventual emancipation of humanity from all forms of bondage and oppression" (Mulia and Cammack 2007:138).

The Australian scholar Tim Lindsey has noted that there was an additional contextual element to the timing of the CLD's presentation. Lindsey observes that the draft was "a conscious response by progressive Muslim intellectuals to the legal Islamisation agenda pushed by conservative Muslims, in particular through . . . Regional Regulations (*Peraturan Daerah*) based on moral norms derived from conservative understandings of Islamic legal traditions." In other words, the CLD was intended as a broadside "defence against resurgent Islamist moral conservatism" (Lindsey 2012:80).

In the end, the gamble proved ill-timed, and it failed. In the interim between 2001 and 2004, the circumstances of Indonesian democracy had changed. After a bitter dispute with former allies, President Wahid was ousted from office in July 2001 (Feillard and Madinier 2006). At first startled by the bold mobilization of Muslim progressives in the early years of the post-Suharto era, by 2002 Islamists of exclusivist persuasion had rebounded and begun to mount well-coordinated campaigns against Muslim feminists, democrats, and inter-faith inclusivists. As seen in Chapter 4, the largest and most exclusive groups, including the FPI, the HTI, and the MMI (see also Hefner 2005b; Hilmy 2010), put in place a media-savvy network for counteracting progressive initiatives, combining social media blitzes with noisy street demonstrations. The activists also enjoyed the quiet backing of still-active members of the earlier New Order regime (see Warburton and Aspinall 2019; Chapter 4). Although the Islamists were unable to translate their campaigns into significant electoral gains, their skill at disseminating their message through their mosque networks changed Muslim public opinion sufficiently to scuttle the proposed CLD reforms.

Two weeks after its introduction, the Minister of Religion withdrew the CLD from legislative discussion. Lindsey captures well the emotional tenor among the bill's supporters with whom I met in the aftermath of its withdrawal: "The authors of the Counter Legal Draft now see it as a failure" (Lindsey 2012:92). Muslim

intellectuals whom I interviewed over the next three years said that they regretted that they had not realized that the CLD draft had poured fuel on the fire of a Muslim populist backlash, not least in semi-governmental ulama bodies like the MUI (see Chapter 3; Hasyim 2011). One can recall that in 2005, just a year after the CLD controversy, the MUI issued a fatwa declaring that "secularism, pluralism, and liberalism" were contrary to Islam (Gillespie 2007; Ichwan 2013; Olle 2009). Over the following months, Islamist vigilantes cited the fatwa to justify attacks on liberal Muslims and Muslim non-conformists (Crouch 2014; HRW 2013; ICG 2008). The heyday of feminist and democratic pluralism in Indonesia had, it seemed, passed.

Conclusion: Agonistic Plurality Revisited

Although the situation of Muslim gender reformists seemed to have darkened by 2004, things were not at all as dire as they at first appeared. Indeed, in many social spheres, women's rights and empowerment have continued to make impressive headway. Although it remains a regular target of exclusivist Islamist criticisms, the State Islamic university system (UIN/IAIN) continues its programs in civic education and "gender mainstreaming." Based at the Yogyakarta Muhammadiyah University, the Muhammadiyah's program of civic education, which includes an extensive discussion of women's rights in Islam, also continues to be used in most of the more than 160 Muhammadiyah colleges and universities. Although there seems little possibility any time soon of any bold reform of Indonesia's marriage laws, Muslim-feminist ideas on sexual trafficking, violence against women, and male abuse of *talaq* divorce continue to make legislative headway (Robinson 2009). The movement of Indonesian women into higher education, employment, and the Islamic sciences continues unabated, sustaining ideals and practices of womanhood in tension with domesticating initiatives. No less important, the emergence of women's rights organizations like Rahima has projected a new discourse for women's empowerment into the all-important domain of Islamic courts. There issues of vital everyday importance to women, including divorce settlements and inheritance rights, are regularly addressed in an equity-minded manner. As Peletz (2022) and Sumner and Lindsey (2010:6) have also observed, women bring twice as many divorce cases to courts as do men, and, "[i]n nine out of ten cases they are successful" (Sumner and Lindsey 2010:6; Peletz 2022:317). These changes in the culture of Islamic courts have provided significant institutional backing for the notion that "women are rights-bearing, entitled citizens, not simply jural minors yoked to men through ties of marriage and co-parenthood" (Peletz 2022:311).

Although in many regards the Indonesian case is distinctive, it nonetheless offers several lessons of general importance on the conditions of the possibility of gender reform in the late-modern Muslim world. The first and most basic insight has to do with the comparative advantages of today's gender reformists by comparison with the first generation of Muslim women activists in the early years of the twentieth century. That first wave drew much of its political energy and ethical inspiration

from the movements of anti-colonial liberation taking shape in lands like Egypt, Tunisia, and Indonesia. As Badran (2009) shows for Egypt and Robinson (2009) has demonstrated for Indonesia, this cross-fertilization between movements of national liberation and women's emancipation was as much epistemological as organizational: ideas of modernist-Islamic reform and post-Enlightenment natural rights carried over from the political field to create new prototypes for the reform of Islamic gender normativities. In this manner, Muslim feminism was able to borrow political energy and intellectual capital from the growing public commitment to national independence and democracy. When some among this first generation of women's activists pressed for reforms of marriage laws and customs, they did so most commonly on the basis of arguments grounded in post-Enlightenment ideals (globalized and vernacularized through the new discourses of nationalism and citizenship) rather than a carefully studied and explicitly reformed *fiqh*.

On this latter point, however, things have changed significantly over the past generation. Although citizen ideals of democratic and nationalist derivation continue to figure in Muslim feminism, the rise of Islamist movements demanding state enforcement of a positivized and codified "Islamic law" has moved questions of Islamic legal traditions to the center of political debate. In these circumstances, the Muslim proponents of gender equality have looked not to Enlightenment prototypes or imagined national communities but to scriptural sources and commentaries in an effort to devise a gender-equitable alternative. However, they do so in ways that show the influence of carry-over ideals from their own experience as modern women (and men) and from their broader involvement in modern education, employment, and associational life (cf. Basarudin 2016).

Far more systematically than their early twentieth-century predecessors, then, Muslim feminists today take aim directly at the legacy of unreformed *fiqh* so as to devise an *internal* religious critique of gender inequality and social injustice. As the anthropologist and Muslim feminist Ziba Mir-Hosseini (2015, 2022) has emphasized, some among these women reformers have sought to carry out a critical exegetical reading of Islamic scripture. Others, including Mir-Hosseini, Kecia Ali (2006, 2010), and, a generation earlier, Fatima Mernissi (1991), have taken an even bolder tack. They seek to advance the cause of gender equity by engaging "with juristic constructs and theories, to unveil the theological and rational arguments and legal theories that underlie them." They do so in order to demonstrate that, rather than being eternal and divine truths, the theories are varieties of "social construction, like other laws in the realm of mu'amalat . . . shaped in interaction with political, economic, social and cultural forces" (Mir-Hosseini 2009:28). Here the carryover in question includes not just the ideals of equality and universal human dignity but a revised methodology for asserting what values (equality, gender-neutral human dignity) should be prioritized in efforts to understand Islamic ethical traditions.

In Indonesia and many other Muslim lands, the intellectual complexity of these reform initiatives presents challenges to their full societal realization. As with

the Muslim feminist organization in neighboring Malaysia, SIS, Indonesia's new Muslim feminists, have made skillful use of new social and communications media to weave together a global network of like-minded reformers (Basarudin 2016). This internationalization has been important not only for creating a sense of transnational solidarity but for developing collaborations with scholars better versed in Islamic legal reasoning in contexts where local activists lack such training. As Basarudin (2016) has shown in her study of SIS, there was no shortage of qualified religious exegetes in late 1980s Iran or Morocco or Indonesia in the 1990s. In Malaysia, however, the secularly educated professional women who founded SIS did not at first have the scholarly expertise in Islamic jurisprudence required to craft detailed arguments for reform. They compensated for this shortcoming, however, by reaching out to international scholars like Amina Wadud, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, and, more recently, Ziba Mir-Hosseini in the United Kingdom and Muhammad Hussein in Indonesia. All four of these scholars have provided sophisticated theoretical ripostes to exclusivist Islamist arguments on gender. To put the matter in more theoretical terms, SIS activists countered epistemological populist claims (Chapter 2) that shariah law and ethics are unitary and unchanging by carrying over into their analyses of Islamic ethical traditions the methodologies of modern historical and contextual analysis, as well as insights from the lived experience of dignity and equality in their own lives (see also Kersten 2015:57–72).

The Indonesian example, then, has parallels in other Muslim societies. In many national settings, a more open politics allows exclusivist Islamists committed to a positivist and ostensibly invariant understanding of Islamic legal traditions to mobilize public opinion so as to make the costs of gender-equality reforms greater than most mainstream politicians are willing to pay. If this situation applies to post-Suharto Indonesia (see Buehler 2016), it applies all the more to countries where the political transition moved from simple regime change to anti-democratic upheaval, as in Libya, Egypt, and Syria after the Arab spring (see Sadiki 2014).

Together these examples also demonstrate that, in the aftermath of the Muslim world's varied transitions, there will be no one-size-fits-all model for gender-equitable ethical reform. But the Indonesian example demonstrates that there are some common prerequisites. First, where some variety of Islamic awakening has given rise to calls for the "shariatization" of state and society (Hasyim 2014; Tibi 2013), successful reform will require leaders with the intellectual wherewithal to engage Islamic ethical and legal traditions on their own terms. Second, after having engaged these traditions, the leadership will have to work to organize mobilizational coalitions willing and able to turn the fruits of such theoretical labors into mass-based campaigns for new ways of knowing what really matters in Islam and then scaling up these values and practices in state and society (Kuru 2019a).

A third and final prerequisite for sustainable gender reform, and Islamic ethical reform generally, concerns changes in popular understandings of shariah and Islamic ethics. Where epistemological populists succeed in convincing a large portion of the Muslim public that a positivized and unchanging Islamic jurisprudence

(*fiqh*) is in fact the divine shariah, Muslim feminists and others proposing reforms to what is seen as divine law are vulnerable to accusations of religious inauthenticity or even apostasy. Seen from this angle, the rise of epistemological populist campaigns for the implementation of an unreformed shariah may well put the proponents of gender-reform and Islamic ethical reform in general on the defensive (see Hadiz 2016, 2018).

It is precisely this challenge, however, that has spurred a new generation of Muslim women and their male supporters to work to reform Islamic ethical traditions from within. As here in Indonesia, the result is still a work in progress. But it is a labor made all the more imperative as a result of the aspirational and practical changes taking place in modern society and in Muslim women's lives. The simple ambition of facilitating women's efforts at "getting things done" has spurred many reform-minded women to return to the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet with eyes both pious and critically aware that piety's fulfillment requires deeper understandings of "the Universe, Nature, and the knowledge related to them" (Ramadan 2009:4). In other words, the gender reformists carry over insights from their own experience as well as from the sciences of the social and natural world to reinterpret God's commands in a holistic, contextual, and equality-affirming manner.

Notes

1 On this matter, however, the trend in recent years has been notably less pluralism friendly. As is also the case in Malaysia, both transgenderism and homosexuality have come under growing social and political pressures in the past forty years, a process that Michael G. Peletz has described as the "pathologization" of a once-tolerated gender plurality. In the 1980s and 1990s the stigmatization of non-heteronormative sexualities was at first more severe in Malaysia than it was in Indonesia but has grown stronger too in *Reformasi* Indonesia with the mobilization of Islamist militias and movements (see Chapter 4; Boellstorff 2004; Peletz 2009; and Wieringa 2015).

2 Pelras's observation shows striking affinities, too, with the cosmological detail I encountered in the early 1980s in the prayer traditions of the Tengger Javanese of East Java. As I observed with regard to one prayer, "[t]he order of the universe is described in terms of ancestry and sexual duality, but, judging by the prayer's spiritual vision, these cannot be reduced to simple human terms. They are animating principles of creation, guardianship, and dependency which, while taking a particular form in the visible human world, also underlie the order of the universe as a whole" (Hefner 1985:202; see also Nancy Smith-Hefner 1992).

3 As Zahra Ayubi notes, in the writings on ethics (*akhlaq)* associated with such monumental scholars as Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali, Nasir-ad-Din Tusi, and Jalal ad-Din Davani, the category of *nafs* is linked to *both* passion and emotion, understood in largely negative terms, *and* to the "metaphysical soul" whose spiritual energies are both drawn on and uplifted through spiritual disciplines (Ayubi 2019:13). In the essay cited earlier, Peletz goes on to observe that "there are some crucial differences between Malay understandings . . . of 'passion' . . . and those reported for culturally similar groups such as the Acehnese"; in particular, he reports (citing Siegel 1969) that "Acehnese sometimes remark that 'passion,' properly guided by 'reason,' can be and ideally is channeled into Islamic prayer . . . as well as other forms of pious and morally virtuous behavior" (Peletz 1994:147). Peletz suggests that the reason for the difference may be

that "Acehnese Islam is more thoroughly infused with Sufistic elements than is Malayan Islam." This less "gendered" model of *nafsu* is indeed the understanding of that I have encountered in discussions with scholars and senior students of the Islamic sciences in Java, many of whom have told me that in classical texts on ethics the *nafs* is seen as neither negative nor particularly characteristic of the feminine. However, as one scholar at the Tebuireng boarding school told me in June 2014, "there are plenty of other, more contemporary texts studied in *pesantren* that do portray women as less rational because more passionate."

4 One of the most respected of progressive Muslim scholars and proponents of *fiqh*-based women's rights, Masdar Mas'udi, sparked controversy in the mid-1990s when he took a second wife while still serving as the director of the Association for the Development of Pesantren and Society (known by its Indonesian acronym, P3M, *Perhimpunan Pengembangan Pesantren dan Masyarakat*). The latter is Indonesia's oldest Muslim NGO dedicated to women's rights and gender reform. The feminist leader of the organization's bureau dedicated to Islamic jurisprudence on women (*Fiqh al-Nisa'*), Lies Marcoes, resigned from P3M in protest and went on to establish a separate NGO, *Rahmina*, which was dedicated to jurisprudence and education on women's sexual rights. I have been friends for more than a quarter century with both of these intellectual activists. For a general reflection on these developments, see Nurmila 2020.

5 Interview, Yogyakarta, January 12, 2019.

6 As Nurmila (2020:42) has observed, the main currents of global Muslim feminist thinking in this second-generation Muslim feminism, including such pioneers as Amina Wadud (1999) and Asma Barlas (2002), tended to rely on careful rereadings of the Qur'an more than they did *hadith* traditions of the Prophet in presenting their scriptural arguments in favor of gender justice. Mastery of the *hadith* compilations is a more intellectually daunting task, and anti-liberal scholars have consistently relied on select hadith to justify anti-egalitarian interpretations of gender roles. For this reason it is all the more remarkable that such a leading and equity-supporting Indonesian *ulama* as Adul Kodir and Muhammad Husein (2001, 2011) of Rahima reaches deep into the Sunna traditions as well as the Qur'an to present Islamic arguments for gender equity. See also Rinaldo 2013:63–96.

7

WHOSE SHARIAH? RELIGIOUS POLITICS AND CITIZEN ETHICS

As the chapters in this book have made clear, Indonesia's return to electoral democracy after 1998–9 coincided with an uptick in the heightened Muslim observance that had begun across Indonesia from the 1980s onward. The full force of Indonesia's resurgence had begun a decade later than was the case in neighboring Malaysia and many Middle Eastern countries (Liow 2009; Peletz 1997). However, once in motion, the changes in Muslim worship, dress, entertainments, and gender styles that ensued showed strong family resemblances with developments in other Muslim-majority countries. But there were differences as well.

As Smith-Hefner (2019), Cammack, Bedner, and van Huis (2015:12), and other analysts have observed, and in contrast to some other Muslim-majority countries, the impact of the heightened religiosity here in Indonesia was felt more strongly in matters of dress, sociability, and gendered intimacies than it was in structural politics and state affairs. Certainly, as in other Muslim lands, the Islamic resurgence in Indonesia gave rise to calls for the state to implement a uniform and positivized version of *shariah* or what its proponents called "Islamic law" (Ind., *hukum Islam*). However, on this vital matter there was anything but a strong public consensus. In fact, in several critical regards, the public's reception of shariah appeals in Indonesia diverged significantly from the pattern seen in many other Muslim-majority lands.

Most notably, and as noted in Chapter 2, political developments in the 2010s in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Nigeria brought "a wave of political openings . . . [that] generated new demands for the codification and application of Islamic law in the public and private lives of citizens" (Kendhammer 2017:3). The impact of mobilizations of this sort here in Indonesia, however, proved far less powerful. Many otherwise observant Muslims were convinced that proposals for implementing shariah were products as many of anti-democratic political ambitions as they

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-7

were any proper understanding of shariah itself. No less significant, many reform-minded Indonesians carried over (Simon 2014) civic and life-experiential values of an egalitarian and democratic nature into their engagements with Islamic ethics, and these imbrications altered actors' understanding of just what should be prioritized in understanding and enacting God's commands.

As this book has also shown, these carryovers had significant political consequences. Between 2000 and 2002 the Muslim-dominated National Assembly rebuffed Islamist proposals to amend the constitution so as to require the state to implement the Islamists' model of "Islamic law" (*shariah*) for all Muslim citizens (Elson 2013; Hosen 2007; Salim 2008). In national elections, political parties that foregrounded shariah implementation in their party platform fared poorly. Survey data, including the results from Pew Center polls as well as two surveys on 1,000 Muslim respondents and 1,000 educators that I conducted (Chapter 5), indicated that some 70–80% of Indonesians felt that the state should work to craft national legislation consistent with Islamic legal traditions (Pew 2013:16). However, follow-up studies found that state implementation of shariah ranked among the top-three political priorities for only 2.3% of Muslim respondents. This was in contrast to some 61.7% who prioritize improvements in public welfare, 38.8% who foreground improvements in public education, and 37.1% who place reducing unemployment among their top three priorities (Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018:92). In short, in Indonesia the growth in Islamic piety did not result in heightened support for a positivized and state-enforced "Islamic law." On the contrary, all evidence indicates that Muslim Indonesians were engaged in "marked struggles to bring together norms and values derived from Islam, local culture, and from international public life" (Bowen 2003:19; cf. Peletz 2013:625). Carryovers from these diverse spheres transformed many Indonesians' understandings of just what should be prioritized in Islamic ethics and law.

In the aftermath of the failure to pass a constitutional amendment mandating state implementation of shariah, Islamist activists changed tactics. They mobilized their ties to long-established Islamist movements in towns and districts far from the national capital to pressure local state officials – including many affiliated with parties of a broadly "secular nationalist" orientation (Buehler 2014, 2016) – to pass "shariah-oriented regional regulations" (*peraturan daerah syariah Islam*; *perda syariah*). The campaigns made notable headway in six of Indonesia's thirty-four provinces: Aceh, West Java, East Java, West Sumatra, South Kalimantan, and South Sulawesi. Several preliminary studies, as well as my own research visits during those early years, suggested that even in these provinces the shariah campaign had slowed by 2007 (Bush 2008:2; Lanti, Akim, and Dermawan 2021).

In a later study of shariah bylaws across Indonesia, however, the political scientist Michael Buehler (2016:1) has observed that, although less dramatic than in the early *Reformasi* period, the adoption of bylaws continued, albeit at a slackened pace: "In reality, at least 443 shari'a regulations were adopted in Indonesia between 1998 and 2013" (ibid.). More important yet, Buehler adds, "[t]he six shari'a clusters

include Indonesia's most populous provinces and encompass half of the country's population" (Buehler 2016:2). Faced with facts like these, several scholars have concluded that the continuing implementation of shariah bylaws represents no less than "a historical breakthrough in the trajectory of political Islam in Indonesia" (Hasan 2006:10). But this is a matter that merits reanalysis.

It is against this unsettled backdrop that this chapter aims to make sense of shariah politics and, more generally, the quest for a new Muslim ethics of citizen belonging and social recognition in post-Suharto Indonesia. This chapter makes four points. First, it emphasizes that movements for the state implementation of Islamic and (in particular) shariah values are best understood as the product not of a unitary process of "Islamization" but of heterogeneous and highly contested campaigns to prioritize and implement certain visions of Islam, public ethics, and citizenship to the exclusion of others. Although for analytic purposes the terms "shariah-tization" and "Islamization" may at times serve as a convenient shorthand, uncritical use of these phrases obscures the fact that, as Peletz (2013:606) has also argued, Islamization projects are actually "imbricated heterogeneous forms" that are "contested, temporal, and emergent" rather than derivative of unchanging shariah norms. The projects, and the Islamic values they profess to represent, are often opposed by Muslims with different understandings of shariah and Islam's ethical priorities (see also Daniels 2017a, 2017b; Peletz 2013:606).

Second, when exploring rival visions of shariah prioritization and citizen belonging, it is important to examine the distributional coalitions promoting different shariah projects and to explore the ways in which the political-economic interests with which different groupings are associated reinforce contrasting understandings of Islamic ethics and law (Hadiz 2016; Kuru 2019a). Whereas Muslim civilization has developed an array of subtle scholarly techniques for determining the Muslim community's ethico-legal priorities (Hallaq 2019; Moosa 2001; Vikor 2005), here in Indonesia militia-based movements for the implementation of shariah by-laws have relied on mobilizational intimidation and identity politics essentialization to discredit rival Muslim scholars and the ethico-legal methodologies they favor (Chapter 4). In so doing the militants promote an epistemological populism premised on the claim that God's law and guidance are simple and unchanging and do not require contextualizing hermeneutic tools. Anyone who thinks otherwise, these populists argue, is an apostate or fool. Such campaigns do not represent a "conservative" return to Islamic tradition, then, as much as they do a rupture with the central currents of scholarship and religiosity in Indonesian society and Muslim civilization as a whole.

Third, the lessons learned from exclusivist Islamist campaigns for shariah implementation require us to refine our understanding of the "public reasoning" (Bowen 2003) that is so important a feature of national life here in Indonesia as in any modern society. As discussed in Chapter 1, the public sphere is "the site where contests take place over the definition of the 'common good' and also of the virtues, obligations and rights that members of society require for the common

good to be realized" (Eickelman and Salvatore 2002:94; see also Taylor 2002:2). However, as has been widely emphasized in studies of public spheres around the world (Calhoun 1992; Fraser 1992; Hansen 1999), real-and-existing public spheres are rarely, if ever, domains of civil and inclusive dialogue equally accessible to all. As here in Indonesia, public spheres are also entangled with contests centering on efforts to exclude certain social actors, while favoring or elevating others.

In a multiethnic and multireligious country like Indonesia, public sphere politics has often centered on struggles between those who believe that citizens of all faiths have a right to participate in public ethical discussions, and others who insist that full participation should be limited to Muslims – and only certain qualified Muslims at that. As with the 2016–17 campaign against the Christian Chinese Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Chapter 4), a key tactic employed by exclusivist participants in these contests has involved efforts to stigmatize whole groups of citizens, creating a differentiated rather than an inclusive public sphere (see Beaman 2016). No less significant, such identarian mobilizations essentialize certain features of actors' identities (religion, race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.) and then present them as preconditions for public recognition. In so doing, identity politics of this sort creates not an egalitarian and participatory public sphere but a differentiated and hierarchical civic space.

Fourth and finally, this overview of shariah culture and politics in democratic Indonesia demonstrates that it is premature and hyperbolic to speak of a historic "breakthrough" in shariah politics or a veritable "Islamization" of Indonesian politics. There can be no question that, as in many (but not all) Muslim-majority countries (Esposito and Mogahed 2007; Pew 2013), a key concern of the revitalization in Islamic piety in late-modern Indonesia has included a heightened aspiration for the implementation of Islamic ethical values in personal and public life. However, scholars as varied as Ahmed (2016), Asad (1986, 2003), Peletz (2013, 2020), Ali (2006), and Hallaq (2013) have all emphasized, the shariah was never a neatly delimited and modularly positivized body of laws and rules. Wherever something identifiable as Islamic "law" exists, it is product of an evolving assemblage "characterized by the interplay of a number of heavily freighted, globally inflected discourses, practices, values, and interests of disparate origins" (Peletz 2013:606).

The revitalization of personal and public piety here in Indonesia, then, has greatly heightened public interest in Muslim ethics in general and shariah norms in particular. In so doing, however, the process has only intensified debates over how to define shariah's meanings and determine its implications for Indonesian democracy and citizen belonging. In all these regards, Indonesia highlights a tension commonplace in the public spheres of most Muslim-majority lands. The tension centers on the Muslim public's aspiration for social justice and democratic accountability, on one hand, and its desire to give Islamic values and the shariah greater public prominence, on the other (Esposito and Mogahed 2007:35; Mandaville 2014; Pew 2013). Seen from this comparative perspective, it is clear that efforts to reform Muslim

ethics by carrying over egalitarian and social-justice values from modern democratic discourses will continue. However, success at winning the hearts and minds of the broader Muslim public to a more democratic-minded shariah will depend not just on scriptural or textual appeals but on the ability of Muslim democrats (and others) to reform Indonesian politics and economics in a manner that realizes popular aspirations for equality and social justice (Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019).

Constitutional Accommodations

Recent studies of shariah politics in modern Muslim-majority societies have shown that efforts to accommodate Islamic and shariah values in public life have enjoyed the support of broad numbers of Muslims – and not just Islamists or, least of all, anti-system radicals (Pew 2013). As the legal scholars Clark Lombardi (2006) and Nathan Brown (2013) have noted, for example, Egypt in the 1980s witnessed outbreaks of armed violence initiated by radical proponents of Islamic law. However, most supporters of shariah legislation in Egypt wanted nothing to do with this anti-state violence or with radically authoritarian understandings of shariah. More remarkably, in the 1990s, the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt took steps to implement a model of Islamic law that was "capable of co-existing with liberal constitutional philosophy" (Lombardi 2006:7). This Egyptian example illustrates a characteristic of public ethical reasoning with regard to matters of shariah widespread in modern Muslim societies today: namely that the carryover from one ethical domain (in this particular case, liberal constitutionalism) to another (shariah legal traditions) can lead to profound adjustments in popular understandings of Islamic shariah itself.

Efforts to nudge Indonesia in a similar direction toward a new constitutional accommodation with both Islamic legal traditions and democratic constitutionalism acquired renewed momentum in the early post-Suharto period (Lindsey 2012; Salim 2008). These efforts would not have been possible, however, were it not for several accommodations already reached in the last decade of the New Order era. In political terms, the accommodations were a response to far-reaching changes in Indonesian society, including the rise of an educated Muslim middle class (Tanter and Young 1990), the religionization of public understandings of spiritual life (Chapter 3), and Suharto's outreach to Muslim supporters so as to undercut challenges to his rule (Chapter 2; see Hefner 2000:130–66). These developments converged to ensure that, well before the end of the New Order regime, there was already considerable interest among segments of the Muslim public in achieving a more extensive accommodation with Islamic legal traditions – even as disagreement remained as to just what aspects of Islamic shariah should be prioritized in doing so.

The concessions the Suharto government made to these aspirations have been widely discussed, but two are of special note (Effendy 2003:149–71; Hefner 2000:129–43; Lindsey 2012). The first was Law 7/1989, which reformed

Indonesia's system of Islamic Courts. The legislation extended the courts' jurisdiction in matters of Islamic marriage, divorce, and inheritance to the whole of the country and strengthened the courts' standing relative to civil courts. As the legal scholar, Mark Cammack, has observed, "Most observers in the 1970s would have found it unthinkable that in the late 1980s the Suharto government would be actively promoting state enforcement of Islamic doctrine" (Cammack 1997:144; Lindsey 2012:255–83; cf. Cammack 1989).

The second and, for most Indonesian observers, more surprising New Order concession to the proponents of Islamic legal traditions was the state-mandated creation of what has come to be known as the Compilation of Islamic Laws in Indonesia (*Kompilasi Hukum Islam di Indonesia*, KHI). The compilation was a codification of Islamic law designed for use in the country's Islamic courts (Cammack 1997; Hooker 2008:17–25). The codification was formulated on the basis of interviews with leading Indonesian religious scholars, as well as the commission's examination of thirty-eight *fiqh* texts long studied in Indonesia's Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) as well as in the State Islamic University system (see Lindsey 2012:69–158). From the first, however, the regulatory scope of the compilation was to be limited. In particular, it dealt only with matters already adjudicated in Islamic courts as stipulated under the 1989 law. As a result, its jurisdiction extended only to matters of marriage and divorce, inheritance, and pious endowments (*waqf*). In May 2006, a revised law on religious courts (No. 3/2006) extended the courts' jurisdiction to Islamic banking, which had been legalized in 1992 but not initially placed under the authority of Islamic courts.

Although its jurisdiction was circumscribed, the compilation raised concerns in Muslim democrat and feminist circles because, among other things, it incorporated a ruling made in 1980 by the MUI prohibiting interreligious marriages (Zuhadi 1989). In addition, although the law formally restricted husbands' rights to polygamy and unilateral divorce and imposed a minimum age for marriage, progressive Muslim critics argued that the compilation did not go far enough toward equalizing rights between men and women, and between Muslims and non-Muslims (see Chapter 6; Musdah Mulia 2005). Notwithstanding these points of tension, the compilation as a whole was reform-minded and modernist in spirit, and, "as an original attempt of codification," it has proved "remarkably successful" (Hooker 2008:26). Moreover, studies have demonstrated that in the years since its dissemination judges implementing portions of the compilation dealing with the rights of women in divorce have shown an "increased willingness to provide women with legal options to extricate themselves from unions that do not live up to the ideals of companionate marriage" (Peletz 2022:318; see also Cammack, Bedner, and van Huis 2015; Sumner and Lindsey 2010).

In the early years of the post-Suharto period, mainstream proponents of state implementation of shariah law hoped to build on and extend these late New Order precedents. After Indonesia's June 1999 elections, the campaign came to concentrate its energies on enacting a constitutional amendment that would mandate state

enforcement of Islamic law. Two of Indonesia's Muslim political parties made the issue their *cause célèbre*: the United Development Party (PPP) and the Crescent Moon Star Party (PBB). Both parties proposed to add the seven words of the Jakarta Charter to Article 29 of the Constitution so that in addition to stating that "the state is based on belief in a unitary God," the article would stipulate that the state is obliged "to carry out the Islamic shariah for its adherents" (see Chapters 2 and 3).

The PPP and PBB's backing of the amendment was central to each party's electoral strategy in the early post-Suharto era. For most of the New Order period, the PPP had been the sole state-authorized Muslim party, and in the post-Suharto era the PPP leadership had hoped that it could retain its dominant position among the Muslim electorate. In the months following Suharto's ouster, however, dozens of new parties of a broadly Islamist and/or Muslim-oriented nature were established. Faced with this unexpected uptick in competition within the Muslim sector of the electoral marketplace, the PPP concluded that its comparative advantage lay in emphasizing a single-minded commitment to a state-enforced variety of Islamic law. As I was told in conversations with PPP leaders in Jakarta and Yogyakarta in 1999 and 2000, however, the party's internal diversity made its leadership wary of encouraging public discussion of the details of shariah implementation – well aware that such discussion might cause discord in its own ranks because even in PPP circles activists had widely different understandings of Islamic law.

The smaller PBB, or Crescent and Moon Party, placed a similar emphasis on state enforcement of a legislatively codified and positivized variety of Islamic law. Significantly, however, the PBB's voter base was narrower than the PPP's; it was also more extensively linked to the exclusivist wing of the Muslim community and, especially, the Saudi-backed Salafist organization, the DDII (see Chapters 2 and 4; Hefner 2000:106–13). In the surprisingly candid words of Chep Hernawan Dapet, a senior PBB activist whom I interviewed on January 8, 2006 (and who is associated with the militantly anti-Ahmadi movement known as GARIS, *Gerakan Reformis Indonesia*, est. 1998; see Chapter 4; Buehler 2016:144), even in the ranks of PBB activists, "there was considerable disagreement over just where to begin, and how much the implementation of shariah law would require revisions to the 1945 constitution." In a frank admission of his own priorities, Hernawan insisted that an issue on which all "true Muslims" (*Muslim sejati*) could agree was to focus on enacting shariah legislation aimed at banning religious appeal (*dakwah*) by two Muslim subgroups: "deviant" (*sesat*) Muslims and followers of the progressive JIL.

To the surprise of party leaders, neither the PPP nor the PBB's shariah-first strategy proved an effective instrument for winning votes. In the 1999 elections, the two parties' combined share of seats in the national assembly came to just 12%. As previous chapters have shown, these parties' electoral share declined even further after the 2004 and 2009 elections, as a result of in-party bickering, corruption allegations, and the electorate's cooling toward proposals to prioritize shariah implementation. The lack of popular support for shariah implementation

also influenced the strategies of other Muslim-based parties, including the democratic Islamist PKS (see Chapter 4). Interviews I conducted in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Medan, Tangerang, and Tasikmalaya from 2001 to 2007 and again in 2014–15 with some forty PKS activists confirmed that among the party rank and file there was still significant support for state-mandated Islamic law. More keenly aware of national currents than their followers in the provinces, however, national leaders with whom I spoke worried that prioritizing the issue would only hurt the party's electoral prospects at the national level. The leadership concluded that the better strategy was to educate Indonesian Muslims as to the aims of the shariah, on the assumption that an educated public would eventually come to support some variety of state-enforced shariah (cf. Fahmi 2006; Octavia 2012). By the late 2010s, however, and as Machmudi (2021) has also shown, many in the PKS's national leadership distanced themselves even further from the cause of shariah implementation, recognizing that the Muslim public's interest in such an initiative had continued to decline.

In the case of Muslim-based parties like the National Awakening Party or PKB (linked to Nahdlatul Ulama) and the National Mandate Party or PAN (the membership of which came disproportionately from Muhammadiyah), leaders whom I interviewed in Jakarta and Yogyakarta in July 2001, 2002, and 2008 were of the opinion that focusing on shariah would only jeopardize these parties' outreach to non-Muslims and Pancasila-oriented Muslims. Among the PAN leadership, however, there was a competing awareness that some among their rank and file still felt that state-enforced shariah should be a campaign priority. After the party's performance in the 1999 elections fell short of expectations, PAN recrafted its Islamic credentials and curbed its outreach to non-Muslims. However, as had long been the case with Muhammadiyah intellectuals (see Burhani 2018; Hooker 2008:28), the party leadership continued to speak of Islamic law, not with reference to unchanging rules or regulations but in terms of the "higher objectives" of the shariah (*maqasid al-shariah*; see Chapter 2). Through a rather less complex process of public reasoning, the PKB leadership opted for a similar emphasis. In the end, both parties chose not to support a constitutional amendment mandating shariah enforcement by the state. In later years, the PKB and the NU leadership distanced themselves even further from any such conventional shariah program, calling instead for a far-reaching reform of Islamic jurisprudence grounded on a commitment to citizenship equality (see the subsequent section and Lohlker 2021; Staquf 2021).

Despite their ideological differences, during 2001–2 the two largest secular nationalist parties, Golkar and the PDI-P, joined forces to oppose the proposal to amend Article 29. They were eventually joined by PAN and PKB; the Justice Party (PK, later renamed PKS) abstained from the final vote. Importantly, however, the actions of all of these parties showed that their leaders were not "assertive secularists" (Kuru 2009) intent on barring religious practices and symbols from public life. At one point, representatives from PAN, the PKB, and the PK flirted with tabling an alternative amendment to Article 29, affirming "the obligation upon the

followers of each religion to carry out its respective teachings" (Kersten 2015:143). PKB officials eventually backed off from this proposal, however, concerned that amending Article 29 would only complicate cooperation with allies in the nationalist camp and the military. As support for even a modified amendment to Article 29 waned, PAN too concluded that the most prudent tack was not to support any shariah-mandating amendment.

In the end, the opponents of amending Article 29 carried the day, and the effort to change the constitution so as to allow enforcement of a state-mandated variety of shariah law failed. Nationalists of a more multireligious orientation breathed a sigh of relief. Nonetheless, the debate that raged from 2001 to 2002 offered one significant lesson. It demonstrated that the majority of representatives in the national assembly were not high-wall secularists opposed to state involvement in religious affairs. Indeed, as it became clear that their efforts to amend Article 29 were doomed, the promoters of state-enforced shariah (particularly those in the PPP) shifted their attention to the formulation of a second constitutional amendment, Article 31 on education. The PPP proposed that the article be amended so as to describe the aims of national education as including the effort "to increase faith and people's consciousness of God" (Salim 2008:105).

In one sense, there was little that was new to this proposal. The Pancasila has always affirmed the importance of citizen belief in God, and in the New Order period this principle was interpreted to mean that the state had a right and obligation to promote religious learning and observance (Chapter 3; see also Bagir 2020; Kim 1996; Menchik 2016). But the amendment to Article 31 provided a new institutional twist on the state's interventionist role. It stipulated that state schools should play a leading role in standardizing the profession of religion in Indonesia and in suppressing those religious currents deemed heterodox (Chapter 3; Makin 2016, 2017a). In this regard, there was evidence of, not so much a "conservative turn" in Indonesian society, as continuity with the state-enforced repressive religionization of the New Order era.

Although the controversy surrounding the educational bill did not capture national attention to the degree that the earlier debate on shariah implementation had, in the four districts that I regularly visited during these years – Tasikmalaya, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Makassar – the draft legislation had an electrifying effect in Islamist circles. Among these activists the bill was seen as offering a platform for access to the school-based socialization of a whole generation of Indonesian youth. A year later, in October 2003, Muslim parties cited the amendment to press for the passage of another law that stiffened the requirement that all schools with Muslim students, including Christian schools, take measures to provide fully separate courses in Islam for those students. As my interviews with twenty-five Christian leaders in Yogyakarta and Jakarta in 2003 and 2004 revealed, the proposed legislation was fiercely opposed by Catholic and Protestant educators, who saw it as an example of government meddling in their internal affairs (see Hefner 2017; Lindsey 2012:236). Despite this opposition, the legislation was

passed. Islamist activists associated with the PPP hailed the outcome, describing it as a great step forward in the struggle to educate citizens on the importance of shariah (Sirozi 2005). Although their earlier efforts at amending the national constitution had failed, the proponents of a more ambitious state enforcement of the shariah were by no means ready to retire from politics. They were soon to discover another field of struggle for their cause.

Shariah Decentralized: The Bylaw Campaigns

The debate over constitutional amendments was just one example of the free-wheeling nature of religious politics in Indonesia during the first ten years of the post-Suharto era. As we have seen, B.J. Habibie's *Reformasi* government, which remained in power until October 1999, rushed through two laws (No. 22 and 25/1999) designed to devolve an array of powers from the nation's capital to districts (*kabupaten*) and municipalities (Aspinall and Fealy 2003:3–4). In the high-throttled manner typical of legislation crafted in the early *Reformasi* period, the law stipulated that the decentralized administration was to be operative by January 1, 2001.

Article 7 of Law 22/1999 also made clear that five administrative functions were to remain under the control of the central government: foreign relations; security and defense; justice; fiscal and monetary policy; and, most important for the present discussion, religion. Primary responsibility for eleven other jurisdictions, including agriculture, public health, environmental affairs, public works, transportation, cooperatives, foreign investment, and education and culture, was devolved to the regions. Although pushed through with little legislative discussion (see Bünte 2009), Law no. 22/1999 was intended in principle to bring government closer to the people. In keeping with this ambition, provincial governors, district heads, and mayors were to be elected rather than appointed, at first by regional political assemblies and after 2004 through direct elections.

Although the international media sometimes assumed that religious extremists in groups like al-Qa'eda were the greatest threat to Indonesia's post-Suharto transition, the backdraft caused by the rapid devolution of powers from Jakarta to the regions caused far more turbulence, and its dynamics were not in any simple way religiously based alone (see Chapter 3). Although the devolution program was premised on the laudable goal of strengthening civil society and democracy, the policy's immediate consequence was a "decentralization of corruption, collusion, and political violence" (Schulte Nordholt and van Klinken 2007:18). Faced with an intensified struggle over local resources, regional party bosses, business elites, and militia chiefs jockeyed to create distributional coalitions capable of winning control of the regional state apparatus and the nebulous "shadow state" that ran alongside it (van Klinken 2007:33,51; Bourchier 2019). With control of government and state resources up for grabs, local politicians also pressed to subdivide districts to create new units and, therefore, new opportunities for rent-seeking spoils. In just a few

years, the number of districts (*kabupaten*) in the country increased by almost 50% to 440.

It was in these highly unsettled circumstances that the locally based militias discussed in Chapter 4 assumed a more politically consequential role. Although some of the larger Islamist militias declared their support for the cause of implementing Islamic law, other militias prioritized struggles for political-economic resources more than any program of ethical reform (Hadiz 2016). Many of these groups, like the celebrated Betawi Brotherhood Forum (*Forum Betawi Rembug*; see Wilson 2006, 2008) in metropolitan Jakarta, had been established in the early months of the post-Suharto transition and were known to have close ties to the former New Order elite. They were vaguely nationalist and "Muslim" in terms of membership, then, but not primarily concerned with Islamic law as such. In the fast-evolving circumstances of the post-Suharto era, however, groups like the Brotherhood Forum concluded that it was in their interest to change their ideological stripes. In 2001 and 2002, when the Brotherhood Forum found itself challenged on its home turf by the FPI (Chapter 4), the organization added the struggle to implement Islamic law to its organizational charter.

Another consequence of decentralization was that aspiring provincial politicians felt emboldened to distance themselves from New Order principles of national unity and mobilize support by appealing to regional and ethnic constituencies. Where a district was dominated by a particular ethnic group, a common technique was to wrap oneself in the flag of ethno-regional solidarity against the interests of Jakarta, the Javanese, or some other immigrant minority resident in one's territory. The pressure to localize and ethnicize led many regional elites to highlight "indigenous" (*asli*), customs, including newly refurbished forms of dress, entertainment, and sociability. However, one program emphasis consistently figured above others in these campaigns, as it would in subsequent shariah-oriented by-laws: Women were the most consistent targets of restrictions, especially with regard to their dress and public movement (Fealy and White 2008:7).

These regional developments in the context of decentralization, then, provided the backdrop to the campaigns for the implementation of shariah bylaws. Although exclusivist Islamist organizations like the HTI, the Council of Indonesian Jihadi fighters (MMI), and the FPI had hoped to scale up these regional struggles into a nationwide campaign, in its first four years the initiative won legislative passage in just one-ninth (53) of the country's 470 districts and municipalities (see Bush 2008:176; Salim 2008:128–9). No less significant, the drafting of the laws displayed none of the care shown by officials in the MORA during the Suharto era when crafting the Indonesian Compilation of Islamic law. The efforts relied even less on what has historically been regarded by Muslim scholars as the methodologies required to derive Islamic jurisprudence from the Qur'an and Sunna (see Lindsey 2012). Although their emphases differed, then, the regional by-laws bore a stronger resemblance to the state-mandated programs of coercive religionization favored under the New Order regime (Chapter 3; Feener 2013).

As both Salim (2008) and Bush (2008:176) have emphasized, in terms of content, some 45% of these first-wave regulations were not based in any direct sense on shariah or Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Acting in the name of public morality rather than Islamic law, the bylaws tightened controls on gambling, women's movement, and the consumption of alcohol. The remaining 55% of the regional regulations *did* reference religious concerns widespread among shariah-minded Muslims. Although their wording varied from district to district, the bylaws shared the aim of making two categories of behavior mandatory for Muslim citizens: the mastery of basic religious skills, such as reading the Qur'an or paying religious alms (*zakat*), and the wearing of dress deemed Islamic in schools, government offices, and other public spaces.

With the notable exception of the special province of Aceh,[1] none of the regional regulations sought to enforce Islamic criminal law; none too applied the draconian *hudud* penalties mandated in classical Islamic jurisprudence for theft, highway robbery, adultery, and other "crimes against God" (see Lindsey 2012:363–70; Vikor 2005). However, the more controversial features of Islamic jurisprudence were not entirely missing from legislative debates. Activists whom I interviewed involved in the regional campaigns, including those from HTI and the Indonesian Council of Jihadi Fighters (MMI), continued to call for a totalizing and mandatory implementation of Islamic law, including criminal law, on the grounds that this alone could "save" (*selamatkan*) Indonesia from moral and political decline (cf. Fealy and Hooker 2006:163–5, 178–80). Although less inclined to call for constitutional amendments, the Islamist-oriented wing of the MUI (see Chapter 4) also sought to extend the scope of shariah-influenced legislation, albeit in a gradualist manner rather than that favored by the MMI and HTI. Like Hernawan and the GARIS movement, the Ulama Council hoped in particular to promote legislation that would criminalize nonconforming Islamic sects, including the 300,000 strong Ahmadiyah (see Chapter 4, and ICG 2008; Olle 2009).

Although their limited scope reflected their utility as a tool for identity politics more than they did any studied engagement with Islamic legal traditions, the regional bylaws had three important effects on the public sphere in *Reformasi* Indonesia. First, Christians and nationalist-minded Muslims regarded the mandating of Islamic dress and ritual behaviors as violations of the citizen equality enshrined in Indonesia's Pancasila and 1945 Constitution (cf. Hefner 2017; Wahid Institute 2006). Although support for the Pancasila remained strong among Indonesians, this particular concern did not prove effective for mobilizing broad public sentiment against the bylaws. The criticism's limited appeal reflected the fact that many Indonesians had long assumed that the Pancasila is a non-secularist charter, compatible with the state promotion of religion and the criminalization of religious activities deemed heterodox (Chapter 3; Makin 2017a).

The second point of controversy was that, in crafting the bylaws, legislators in many districts and towns had prioritized getting the legislation passed quickly more than they had devising instruments for the regulations' enforcement. In South

Sulawesi, for example, proponents of the laws with whom I spoke in visits to the district of Bulumkumba in 2005 and 2006 admitted quite openly that they had feared that devoting too much time to the details of enforcement would only undermine chances for the legislation's passage. Members rushed the draft legislation through the regional assembly, then, explaining that the details on enforcement could be worked out later (see also Hooker 2008:263). Although acknowledging that bylaws dealing with sexual trafficking and violence against women had been well intended, Alimatul Qibtiyah of the government-sponsored National Commission on Violence against Women also commented to me in January 2015 that the haste with which the regional bylaws had been drafted also greatly compromised women's civil rights.

The third way in which the bylaws proved controversial is that, with the mechanisms of enforcement put in place so quickly, the most frequent targets of the ill-trained young men charged with enforcing the laws were women and the poor. As in Tangerang, West Java, the morals police' arrest of innocent women out after dark sparked loud protests from civil society and women's groups (Musdah Mulia 2005). Although many of the more ardent proponents of shariah law, like HTI and the MMI, claimed the shariah could be a weapon with which to fight government corruption, none of the regional bylaws prioritized the issue, and few of the individuals prosecuted under the bylaws came from the ranks of the well-off.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the momentum for the crafting of shariah-inflected bylaws grew briskly, peaking in 2003. But opposition to the bylaws grew as well, with the result that, as Bush has noted (2008:179), the number of new bylaws dropped significantly between 2003 and 2007. As seen in the anti-pornography law passed by the National Assembly in 2008, legislation of an ethico-religious nature could still attract significant public support (see Lindsey 2012; Pausacker 2013). However, at the national level, the proponents of this legislation soon concluded that they could make their best case for morality-oriented legislation on general ethical grounds, rather than by presenting the legislation as explicitly grounded in Islamic shariah (see Kitley 2008).

The short window during which shariah bylaws attracted broad public support also showed that the bylaw campaigns benefited from the anxieties created by the sudden collapse of the New Order and a spike in criminality and communal violence during the first three years of the *Reformasi* transition (Chapter 4). Several Indonesian observers have noted that there was an additional influence on the regional bylaw campaigns. The movements gained greatest traction in districts that two generations earlier had been strongholds of the Darul Islam movement (see Chapter 4). Indeed, half of the districts that implemented bylaws had been centers of Darul Islam mobilization in the 1950s and early 1960s (Bush 2008:183). The DI districts also hosted some of the best organized regional Islamist militias as in Bulukumba in South Sulawesi, and Garut, Ciamis, and Tasikmalaya in West Java. In South Sulawesi, the head of the Committee for the Implementation of Islamic Shariah (KPSI) was none other than Abdul Aziz Kahar Muzakkar, a man

with whom I had several extended interviews in 2007 and 2008. Abdul Aziz was the well-educated and affable son of Kahar Muzakkar, the leader of the Darul Islam rebels in South Sulawesi in the 1950s (Buehler 2016; Juhannis 2006).

Although they played a leading role in organizing some Islamist militias, it is important not to exaggerate the DI activists' influence in the actual *crafting* of legislation. Most of the mayors and district chiefs who lent their support to the bylaw legislation, including government officials I met with in Tangerang, Ciamis, and Garut in West Java and Bulukumba in South Sulawesi, were affiliated with the Golkar party (see also Lanti, Akim, and Dermawan 2021). That party's national leadership had at first opposed efforts to amend Article 29 of the Constitution so as to allow state enforcement of shariah. In the unsteady world of post-Suharto Indonesia, however, even this political tack had its limits, not least for some in the regional Golkar leadership. In interviews that I conducted in December 2007 at the Golkar city headquarters in Tangerang, West Java, local party officials acknowledged that recently they had been "reminded" by the national party leadership that the Tangerang regulations restricting unescorted women's movement after dark "went too far." More surprising yet, Tangerang city's vice-mayor (a member of the PKS) told me in no uncertain terms that the bylaws had "nothing to do with shariah" but "were concerned with public morals and had been welcomed by non-Muslims as well as Muslim citizens." My focus group discussions that same week with Tangerang Christians confirmed that many ordinary people in their community *had* welcomed the crackdown on Tangerang's pervasive (but otherwise legal) prostitution industry, in which elements of the local police were alleged to be involved. However, from the start Christian groups and a local alliance of women's organizations had also objected to regulations that forbade women from going out of the house unescorted after 10:00 p.m.[2]

In Bulukumba, South Sulawesi, Golkar officials had also joined the campaign in support of shariah bylaws, in what critics claimed was a clear effort to burnish their Islamic credentials in the face of growing popular unrest over corruption allegations (see Buehler 2014, 2016). By the time I conducted interviews in that district in 2006, 2007, and 2008, with a follow-up visit in 2015, several mid-level Golkar officials seemed to have developed second thoughts about the wisdom of this burnishing technique. One mid-level Golkar official volunteered that some of his regional superiors had been "too quick to support" the legislation and added that he thought that it was time for local Golkar officials to "pay attention again" to the national leadership.

The national chair of Golkar in the earlier of these two periods was none other than Vice President Jusuf Kalla, an ethnic Bugis and a native son of South Sulawesi. As early as 2005, Kalla had spoken out against the shariah-influenced bylaws. Two officials I interviewed in Makassar two years later reported that "underlings [*bawahan*] of the vice president" had communicated his personal displeasure with provincial party leaders' support for the bylaws and that he had asked other local officials to reign in their colleagues. Although I met briefly with Kalla in late 2005,

I was never able to confirm these reports with the vice president himself. However, the commentaries were consistent with information provided by Golkar officials interviewed in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Medan, and Makassar between 2006 and 2008 and again in 2015. One Jakarta official summarized the situation this way:

> Of course we supported the efforts of citizens and fellow Muslims to abide by the aims [Ind. *maksud*] of Islamic law. But playing the "shariah card" for simple political gain is another matter. It's fine to support public morality and the suppression of vice (*maksiat*). But it really should be done in a way consistent with the national interest.

The shift in sentiment in upper-echelon party circles contributed to the waning public support from the mid-2000s onward for shariah-oriented regional bylaws. Other developments reinforced the public's hesitancy. By the 2010s, the communal violence that had raged in eastern Indonesia in the first three years of the *Reformasi* era had subsided, even though refugees in some regions were still unable to return home (Duncan 2016; Tahun 2021). The relative peace sidelined an issue that militants in the Islamic Defenders' Front, the Laskar Jihad, and the HTI had used to discredit nationalist opponents of shariah legislation (Chapter 4). More generally, by the early 2010s, much of the public seemed tired of the post-Suharto bickering and wanted the nation's politicians to get back to the business of jobs creation and development. In the national assembly, more than 40% of parliamentarians elected in 2004 had business backgrounds, while "the number of former military officers, bureaucrats, and nationalist political activists, as well as people with backgrounds in Islamic mass organizations, has fallen" (Ufen 2008:26). A similarly developmentalist turn was apparent in the relative slackening of public interest in the old, religion-based ideological divides of the 1950s and 1960s and in the greater fluidity of political affiliation seen generally (see Aspinall 2005b:121).

Certainly, as the 2002 debates on constitutional amendments had revealed, the main political parties still differed on some ideological matters. However, most party leaders sensed that the public had serious reservations about efforts to enforce elements of Islamic law in a manner that appeared exclusivist or sectarian. Rather than foregrounding campaigns for the implementation of so-called shariah bylaws, then, Muslim-oriented parties joined their nationalist counterparts to engage in "a fight for the middle ground" (Ufen 2008:28). Most have held to that course in the years since, prioritizing good governance and social services over efforts to implement a state-codified version of shariah law (see also Mietzner 2009:142).

This combination of influences meant that, from 2007 onward, efforts in the provinces to implement shariah-oriented legislation on the model of the 2001–3 period were slowing. The decline has led some observers to conclude that efforts to implement Islamic shariah had become a thing of the past. But that conclusion is also premature. It is not that the Muslim public in Indonesia has lost interest in religiously inflected public ethics. Rather, the public appears to be exploring new and

more efficacious ways of putting Islamic ethical priorities into practice. What has changed is less a commitment to drawing Islamic values into public and personal life than precisely which among the values deemed Islamic should be prioritized and who has the authority to define them.

Pious Publics and Normative Prioritization

The impression that growing numbers of Muslim Indonesians were not particularly interested in prioritizing implementation of a state-mandated version of Islamic law was confirmed by the results of several public opinion surveys conducted in the 2000s by highly regarded survey institutes, including the Indonesian Survey Institute (*Lembaga Survei Indonesia* [LSI]) and the PPIM at the Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta, discussed in Chapters 2 and 5. As with most matters with regard to Islamic ethics, however, the results paint a fascinating but complex picture.

On the one hand, these surveys show that somewhere between 60% and 75% of Muslim Indonesians agree with the notion that the state should implement shariah law for all Muslim citizens. These findings were consistent with those reported from the Indonesian data featured in the Pew Center's study of global Muslim attitudes on shariah values (Chapter 5; Pew 2013). As was also discovered in the Pew survey, support for any such legislation declines when respondents were asked about such harsh *hudud* penalties as the amputation of thieves' limbs or the stoning of adulterers (Jamhari 2006). Subsequent surveys have also indicated that since 2006 support for state-enforced shariah has diminished somewhat – but the result still stands above 50%. Other studies have confirmed these findings, showing that, at least when asked by pollsters to respond to survey questions, Indonesian Muslims voice support for state enforcement of shariah.

On the other hand, however, other studies, and my own one-on-one interviews, suggest that the responses reflect complex, conditional reasoning processes rather than values determinant in some definitive manner of real-world priorities or choices. In particular, and as noted in Chapter 5, the overwhelming majority (more than 95%) of Muslim Indonesians do not regard shariah implementation as a personal or political priority (Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani 2018). No less significant, when survey questions are formulated in such a way as to juxtapose shariah norms with values from civic and nationalist registers, support for shariah implementation drops precipitously. The qualification suggests that much of the support for shariah recorded in public opinion surveys has to do with the perception of shariah as an index or symbol of personal piety rather than a broad-sweep blueprint for political order. In a 2007 survey, LSI researchers asked more than 1,000 Indonesians whether they supported a "Pancasila" state or would prefer some other bases for the Indonesian state (LSI 2007). Indonesians understand that a Pancasila state is one based on multi-confessional principles rather than Islamic law (see also Ramage 1995). According to this survey, 90% of the respondents indicated that they preferred a Pancasila state to any alternative.

As discussed in Chapter 5, interviews I conducted with 400 Muslim educators in several provinces in the period from 2004 to 2010 provided an additionally nuanced sense of how these respondents carry over different values and priorities into their reasoning with regard to Islamic values and shariah. Although 72.2% of my survey respondents had expressed support for the idea that state law should be consistent with or derived from the Qur'an and Sunna, only 24% of interviewees respondents indicated that they had actually voted for a party in any sense dedicated to that goal. Moreover, among these latter respondents, more than three-quarters had given their vote to the PKS (see Chapter 4). Since 1999 that party has downplayed its commitment to state enforcement of shariah in favor of a program emphasizing clean government and economic growth (Machmudi 2021).

Even among the PKS educators and activists I interviewed, a change had occurred in the period from the early 2000s, when I first conducted regular interviews with PKS activists in Yogyakarta, Tasikmalaya, and Makassar, and the late 2010s. In the early 2000s, the majority of PKS activists had expressed support for a comprehensive implementation of Islamic law – albeit, I was told, only after the Indonesian public had been educated as to the law's content and benefits. By the late 2010s, this opinion had become a minority view, giving way to the contrary opinion that what is important with regard to the law is not its formal letter but its higher "objectives" (Indo., *maksud*, Ar., *maqasid*; see Chapter 2). Respondents pointed out that the law's higher aims cannot be determined on the basis of isolated scriptural passages read apart from the Qur'an and Sunna as a whole. A variation on this last comment was often voiced by the less legally literate. These respondents emphasized that they too were committed to upholding Islamic ethics values. But the values have to be implemented in a way that, as one Makassar interviewee put the matter in August 2008, "they make a positive difference in our lives, rather than causing social discord."

Findings like these are not unique to Indonesia but reflect ambivalences in public ethical reasoning widespread across the Muslim world (Esposito and Mogahed 2007; Pew 2013). As Zubaida has observed, for most Muslims the shariah is not just law but "a vocabulary of morality and justice" (Zubaida 2003:11). Notwithstanding this ethical role, the shariah's precise meanings and public entailments vary widely in different times and places. Here in Indonesia, in particular, the Muslim public seems keenly aware of the tension between its commitment to ethico-legal ideals identified as "Islamic" or "shariah-based," on one hand, and its desire for good governance, economic development, and national citizenship, on the other. Rather than rushing to support programs for state enforcement of Islamic law, then, most Muslims seem to contextualize this imperative relative to others. While still voicing support for the notion that shariah values should be accommodated in national legislation, many respondents place greater emphasis on the role of shariah values in personal life and local public order rather than in structural matters of state.

The latter process is in fact pervasive in public ethical discussions in Muslim Indonesia. It also bears some resemblance to the cross-fertilizations Asma

Basarudin has highlighted in her analysis of ethical reasoning among the leadership of SIS, the well-known Muslim-feminist organization based in Malaysia. Basarudin (2016) observes that SIS activists have sought "to reclaim women's human dignity as believing Muslims" by challenging long-standing interpretations of Islamic ethics through appeals to the "higher aims" of the shariah (*maqasid al-shariah*). This "strategy of claiming rights . . . combines feminist hermeneutics, constitutional law, and the principles of human rights to reform laws and public policies" (ibid.:6). In other words, the ethical work in which SIS activists engage seeks to establish new priorities in the understanding of Islamic ethics and Malaysian citizenship by carrying over concepts drawn from personal experience and human rights into the understanding of "religious specificities." Just as is the case in some circles in Indonesia, the imbricational process "destabilizes the perception that there is a single concrete way of being Muslim or practicing Islam" (ibid.:7). In so doing, the hermeneutic also opens processes of ethical reasoning to something new: "women's experiences and lived realities" (ibid.:17), as well as egalitarian and dignity-affirming concepts of human rights.

Shariah Politics: Centripetal or Centrifugal?

In the course of my research on shariah discourse and practice, I encountered a particularly striking example of these interactions and adjustments with regard to shariah understandings; the example is all the more remarkable in that it had to do with an Islamist organization committed to the ideal of shariah as invariant and all-encompassing. From 2001 through 2016, I conducted annual interviews with Irfan Awwas and his associates in the MMI (see Chapter 4). My aim in these interviews was to trace the MMI's ideological evolution, especially with regard to its leaders' understandings of Islamic law and ethics. The MMI's founding ambition has long been to implement an invariant and positivized version of shariah law with the ultimate aim of replacing both the Indonesian constitution and national philosophy (Pancasila) as the ethico-legal basis for the nation (see Hilmy 2010:109–17). In the months following its formal establishment in Yogyakarta, Java in August 2000, the MMI worked to recruit a broad base of activists and organizations to its ranks, including such sophisticated mainstream intellectuals as the Cornell-trained historian of Islam, Deliar Noer (1926–2008).

The MMI's programmatic statements emphasized that the shariah is unitary, unchanging, and akin to modern positive law (see also Lindsey and Kingsley 2008). The shariah, MMI spokespersons told me, represents a body of divine commands that *cannot* be adjusted in light of national culture or local values. MMI officials thus spoke disparagingly of the idea popular in some Muslim legal circles during these years that Indonesia might be able to develop its own national school of law or *madhab* (Feener 2007; Hooker 2008). Tellingly, when I asked Irfan Awwas in 2015 what model of shariah and Islamization he found closest in spirit to that to which the MMI was dedicated, he responded without hesitation, "that of

PAS [the all-Malaysia Islamic Party] in Malaysia" (see also Liow 2009:12–18). He noted that MMI officials had in fact consulted regularly with representatives from the Malaysian Islamist party, and PAS delegates had attended several MMI national and regional conferences. Awwas also reported that the MMI had held especially important strategy meetings with PAS officials in 2004, 2008, and 2012, in Cianjur, West Java, and Makassar, South Sulawesi. In 2004 and 2008 representatives from the Committee for the Preparation of the Implementation of Islamic Law (KPPSI) in the latter city had spoken proudly of their regular consultations with PAS officials.

In a 2008 study of MMI shariah proposals, the Australian legal scholars Tim Lindsey and Jeremy Kingsley (Lindsey and Kingsley 2008) provide a detailed analysis of the MMI's proposals with regard to Islamic law. They comment that the MMI code is vague on the question of how shariah law is to be implemented. The code, they point out, is instead characterized by a spirit of "utopian ambition" that leads to conclusions such as "the application of the MMI Code will result in a removal of 'the criminality, disharmony of life, moral decadence, and the decay of human values' flourishing under the current (secular) Criminal Code" (2008:5). "The attitude so saturates the text of the MMI Code that little attention is paid to specificities and practicalities, presumably because these are matters that will take care of themselves once God's law is in force."

Over the years following my initial interviews with the MMI leadership, I carried out additional interviews with dozens of Muslim activists in Jakarta, Yogyakarta, West Java, and South Sulawesi who at one point had identified with the MMI mission. A central question in all these discussions had to do with the compatibility of shariah law with the ideals of Indonesian nationalism and Pancasila citizenship. One of the most surprising findings from these interviews was that, in the period from the MMI's founding in 2000 to interviews I conducted after 2010, growing numbers of activists who had once identified with the MMI mission had concluded that the MMI's one-size-fits-all understanding of Islamic law was religiously problematic – and contrary to the principles of Indonesian nationalism they held dear.

The majority among the pro-shariah activists I interviewed in the early 2000s had at first been enthusiastic about the MMI's effort to organize a clearing house for pro-shariah groups. A significant number of these activists had also collaborated with the MMI in other political initiatives, including "anti-vice" campaigns (Chapter 4) and programs for sending fighters to battle Christians at the peak of the communal conflict in Maluku from 1999 to 2001. In interviews I conducted from 2010 onward, however, the great majority of former supporters had defected from the MMI position on shariah. Many now described the MMI understanding of shariah as "dry" (*kering*) because it lacks specificity with regard to key questions of citizenship and nation. Democratic Islamists in the PKS were among those whose views now diverged most significantly from the MMI leadership. PKS spokespersons took particular exception to the MMI's claim that the implementation of Islamic law required that Muslims repudiate Indonesia's constitution and tradition of multireligious nationalism (see also Machmudi 2021).

In this regard, it is also revealing to note in which provinces in Indonesia the MMI's anti-national Islamization projects still had some appeal: Aceh and South Sulawesi. Aspinall (2009) and Feener (2013) have provided vivid accounts of the interplay between ethno-nationalist and shariah projects in Aceh. Buehler (2016) has provided a no-less rich analysis of shariah politics in South Sulawesi. One takeaway from these studies, confirmed in my own interviews with shariah activists in these provinces, is that these regions' perceived injustices at the hands of the central government and armed forces made nationalist ideals – and the ideal of promoting an Indonesia-specific "school of Islamic law" (*madhab*) – far less resonant with local sensibilities than elsewhere in Muslim Indonesia.

There is an interesting parallel in all this between the political and religious fields. Some years ago, the political scientist Marcus Mietzner wrote of the prevalence of "centripetal" trends in political party competition in post-Suharto Indonesia, as opposed to the "centrifugal" instability of the 1950s (Mietzner 2008). Inter-party rivalries during the latter period, Mietzner observed, became so polarized that the central disputes "took place at the far ends of the ideological spectrum." Clifford Geertz had made much the same point in the conclusion to his most accomplished ethnographic study, *Religion of Java* (1960a). Mietzner goes on to observe that, in the post-Suharto era, and despite the anti-systemic appeals of groups like the JI, "the vast majority of Indonesians, and Indonesian Muslims, do not favour a change in the political system" (Mietzner 2008:431). As Pepinsky, Liddle, and Mujani (2018) have also argued, this generalization applies all the more fully to Muslim actors' views of just what values should be prioritized in state developmental programs. The major Muslim-based parties differ little on questions of shariah and democracy. They agree in part because their leadership is aware that most in the Muslim public have a close-at-hand or non-structural interest in Islamic law, preferring "imbricated heterogeneous forms" (Peletz 2013:606) related to personal piety to any sweeping transformation of state structures. It is noteworthy too that, although many ordinary Indonesians are not familiar with the details of their scholarship, such Muslim democrat intellectuals as Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid held similar views (Abdullah 2021; Barton 1995, 2002). Both rejected the secular-liberal notion that religion is a private matter, the values of which cannot be drawn into public life. But both also emphasized that the primary arena in which Islam should exercise a governing influence in Indonesia is not with regard to the form of the state but in "developing the noble character needed for a peaceful and just society" (Wisdom 2022:259). In Madjid's terms,

> Perhaps nothing is more important and more serious for the future of our nation than the problem of maintaining high ethics and morals. It is in these attempts to overcome problems that Muslims can make their greatest contribution.
>
> *(Madjid 2019:3914)*

None of these examples imply that identity politics mobilizations like that which raged in 2016–17 against the Christian Chinese governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok, Chapter 3) have no future in Indonesian politics. The carryovers from the religious to the political spheres, and vice versa, can work in inegalitarian and exclusive as well as egalitarian and pluralist ways. One particularly striking example of this latter fact has been analyzed by Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida (2018) in their survey of Muslim public opinion both before and after the 2016–17 mobilization against Governor Ahok (Chapter 4). The authors' findings demonstrate that prior to the anti-Ahok campaign "Islamist attitudes were in fact moderating" (2018:159). The authors point out that this fact indicates that "growing intolerance towards non-Muslims . . . could not have been responsible for the mobilization" (ibid.:161). However, in the aftermath of the anti-Ahok campaign, the proportion of the Muslim public subscribing to the core narrative anti-Ahok campaigners had promoted – that Surah al-Maida 51 in the Qur'an requires "the exclusion of non-Muslims from political office" (ibid.) – increased by a full 7.3% (to a total of 49.6% of the Muslim public).

Mietzner, Muhtadi, and Halida rightly conclude that the increase in anti-pluralist sentiment was not the result of long-standing trends in Muslim public opinion but instead reflected "the formidable ability of religio-political entrepreneurs to transform and escalate a set of existing grievances among Muslims into an effective mobilizational tool for an Islamist agenda" (2018:170). At the same time, the authors observe, "Muslim attitudes vis-à-vis non-political issues – such as cultural expressions of the Islamic faith and its relation to other religions – remained stagnant or continued to moderate" (ibid.:171). Remarkably, for example, the percentage of Muslims objecting to the erection of non-Muslim places of worship in their neighborhood declined from 52% prior to the mobilization to 48.2% afterward. Here too we see evidence that public reasoning on the shariah and Muslim ethics is not settled in a narrowly scripturalist way but contextual and contingent (see also Hadiz 2016; Hoesterey 2012, 2018).

Public Reasoning and Islamic Ethical Reform

Twists and turns in Muslim public opinion with regard to shariah ethics and citizenship in the aftermath of the Ahok affair reinforced the conviction among some Western observers that an anti-pluralist "conservative turn" had taken place in Indonesian Muslim society. Others, including Mietzner and Muhtadi (2020), have reached an even more pessimistic conclusion. Drawing on a broad body of survey data, these two authors argue that Muslim Indonesians in general, and the followers of Nahdlatul Ulama in particular, have always shown a degree of "religious intolerance . . . as high and pronounced as in the rest of the Indonesian Muslim community, raising questions about NU's effectiveness in disseminating pluralist values even in its own community" (Mietzner and Muhtadi 2020:61). The authors

dismiss what they decry as the "myth of pluralism" that they claim has come to be associated with Muslim society in Indonesia in general and Nahdlatul Ulama in particular. They conclude that there is "a significant mismatch between the self-perception of the NU leadership and the actual views held by the NU grassroots" (ibid.:58).

As the chapters in this book have emphasized, survey research conducted by other research bodies, including Saiful Mujani's LSI, the Pew Research Center's 2013 global study of Muslim values (Pew Research Center 2013), Menchik's (2016) survey of Muslim political elites, and my own surveys of the Muslim public and Muslim educators (Chapter 5) have confirmed that on certain matters Indonesian Muslims in general and the NU rank and file in particular give voice to strikingly "illiberal" views, particularly with regard to non-Muslims and Muslim minorities like the Ahmadis and Shi'a.

However, this overall finding needs to be understood against the backdrop of recent theoretical research that shows that, in any and all societies, practices of "tolerance" and social recognition are rarely product of a generalized attitude applied consistently across social fields in a systematic and rationalized way. On the contrary, such heterogeneous practices of social recognition typically reflect an "unrationalized multiplicity" (Jackson 2022:151) that results in highly contingent and inconsistent processes of public reasoning and civic recognition. Over the course of this book's chapters, we have seen many examples of social recognition differentiated in ways that reflect not a neatly rationalized and consistent disposition toward "tolerance" but evolving and unfinished assessments as to what issues should be prioritized in which social settings. Although both the NU and Muhammadiyah had as early as the 1930s rallied to a multiconfessional variety of nationalism that recognized the citizen rights of non-Muslims, the recognition did not extend to the practitioners of indigenous religions or *kepercayaan* spiritual groups (see Chapter 3). Not surprisingly, the recognition did not apply to supporters of the Communist Party, who, especially in the period from 1949 to 1965, were regarded not merely as political rivals but as blasphemous heretics (Chapter 3). Even in the post-Suharto *Reformasi* era, opposition to both Marxism and certain varieties of Anglo-American liberalism has remained the default position for many Indonesians. The point, then, is not that it is a "myth" that Indonesian Muslims in general and NU members in particular are "tolerant" – an across-the-board claim that, in historical fact, very few Indonesianists have ever made. It is instead that, in Indonesia as in all other societies, tolerance and social recognition are extended to different citizen groupings in ways that reflect complex and contingent judgments rather than a stable and rationalized principle applied uniformly across all social fields (cf. Katznelson 2014).

This latter point raises another, Indonesia-specific matter. Researchers who have worked in this country have long been aware that the more distinctive feature of many in the Indonesian Muslim community has never been an across-the-board "tolerance" nor, least of all, Western-style "liberalism" but a deep and abiding love

of and commitment to the project of Indonesian nationalism. In a foreword to a book originally published in 2009, Abdurrahman Wahid wrote, "The creative dialogue between NU and the spirit of nationalism is by no means easy to explain" (Wahid 2009:viii). Nonetheless, he made clear that dialogue is at the very heart of NU and Muslim Indonesia's engagement with political modernity. Certainly, at the high point of Indonesia's political polarization in the years from 1959 to 1965, many Muslim Indonesians, including some in NU, seemed willing to put aside the ideal in favor of a commitment to the establishment of an Islamic state. But nationalist winds revived in the 1970s and 1980s, and today they remain a dominant characteristic of Indonesian Muslim political culture.

As the campaign against the Chinese Christian governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama demonstrated, however, this broad commitment to an inclusive nationalism seen as consistent with Islam's highest purposes (*maqasid*) has at times been undermined or diminished. One can cite exclusivist developments like these as proof of the "myth of pluralism," but this latter judgment obscures more than it illuminates. Researchers who have examined Muslim mass organizations in Indonesia like NU or Muhammadiyah have always recognized that the vigorously pluralistic views promoted by Muslim leaders like the late President Abdurrahman Wahid of NU or Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif of Muhammadiyah were not reflections of a uniform popular will. On the contrary, they were efforts undertaken by Muslim leaders keenly aware that most of the rank and file in their respective organizations had significantly less inclusive views than they did.

Although he was reluctant to state the point too loudly, in his conversations with me over some sixteen years the late Abdurrahman Wahid regularly admitted that the NU rank and file, as well as a good portion of the leadership in NU, did not share his inclusive views on ethnic and religious minorities. In this respect, and like most political leaders in religiously oriented movements, Wahid's view on citizen inclusivity might be more appropriately described as vanguardist rather than "representative": that is, he assumed that it is the responsibility of leaders not to reflect the majority opinion in their organization but to lead the membership toward better or "correct" views in light of an ethical standard deemed truer and more sublime. Like epistemological populism (Chapter 1), epistemological vanguardism represents a response to the agonistic plurality that has long characterized public ethical debate in Indonesia. Rather than vilifying its rivals and narrowing its horizons, however, epistemological vanguardism of a pluralist sort aims to open public reasoning to a new and more inclusive fusion of social horizons.

The Nusantara Turn

Rather than a "myth" that hides an anti-pluralist truth, a vanguardist dynamic has also underlain many of Nahdlatul Ulama's bolder initiatives since the 2000s with regard to citizen rights and religious and ethnic minorities. In the early 2000s, and in the face of what many observers described as the "conservative turn" in

Indonesian Islam, Abdurrahman Wahid and others in the pluralist wing of the Nahdlatul Ulama began to speak more regularly about the values and importance of "Islam Nusantara" or "archipelagic" (i.e., Indonesian) Islam (Burhani 2018). These and other supporters of the ideal made clear that in speaking of Islam Nusantara they were not distinguishing Islam in Indonesia from Islam in other parts of the world in any way that had to do with basic matters of doctrine (*aqidah*) or worship (*ibadah*). What they meant to highlight were differences of social custom, national culture, and history, not least with regard to how one engages non-Muslims and citizen belonging. As Wahid also made clear to me in a conversation in August 2004, he and others foregrounded the Nusantara rhetoric, not because they felt it reflected the majority sentiment of the Muslim community but because they felt that the project of multireligious citizenship was in peril in the face of revivalist and Salafist advances – including within NU and Muhammadiyah circles. In light of these examples of vanguardist leadership, Mietzner and Muhtadi (2020:29) are perhaps right to argue that "the religio-cultural and political attitudes of NU followers . . . towards non-Muslims" may not be "significantly different from those held by the rest of the Muslim population." But it is precisely their appreciation of this tension that has spurred leaders in the civic-pluralist wings of NU and Muhammadiyah to dedicate themselves to the task of redirecting public sentiment toward a more inclusive, egalitarian, *and* Islamic public ethics.

The groundwork for the Nusantara campaign of the 2010s had been laid in the late 1990s and early 2000s. During these years NU scholars in alliance with a smaller number of modernist Muslims turned their attention to the task of reformulating Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) so as to provide, once and for all, a solid legal foundation for the reform of Muslim discourses on non-Muslims, citizenship, and women (see Lindsey 2012). These efforts began with attempts to reform jurisprudence on matters of women and gender equality, but they eventually extended to broad matters of citizen belonging.

After 2014, this Nusantara initiative took a more substantive leap forward, in response to national and international developments. In that year, Kyai Haji Ahmad Mustofa Bisri (b. 1944), chair of NU's Supreme Council, initiated a series of discussions with Kyai Haji Yahya Cholil Staquf (b. 1966), his nephew and NU General Secretary. The two men met regularly to discuss measures that might be taken to combat the growing influence of transnational groups like al-Qa'eda and ISIS. Popularly known as Gus Mus, Bisri is a widely respected Muslim scholar and the director of the Pondok Pesantren Raudlatuth Thalibin in Rembang, Central Java; he is also a celebrated poet and painter. Colloquially known as Gus Yahya, Staquf had served as a spokesperson for Abdurrahman Wahid during the years of his presidency from 1999 to 2001 (when I first interviewed him) and over the years had also remained active in the NU-linked PKB. In May 2018 President Joko Widodo appointed Staquf to the Presidential Advisory Council. On December 24, 2021, Staquf was elected chair of the executive council of NU, beating the incumbent Said Aqil Siradj by 337 votes to 210. Although trained in the Islamic sciences

at the prestigious Madrasah al-Munawwir Krapyak, in Yogyakarta, Staquf had also studied sociology at Gadjah Mada University. To this day, and as I heard again in a conversation with him at the Religion 20 Conference prior to the G20 conference in Bali in November 2022, Staquf has a gift for interspersing themes from democratic theory into his reflections on Islamic jurisprudence. In June 2018, Staquf had caused controversy when he visited Israel as a guest of the American Jewish Committee. In a conversations with me in March 2022, he stated that he was fully aware that such a visit might prove controversial, but he felt it was important to go nonetheless so as to signal NU's support for Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

In addition to responding to the rise of ISIS and other extremist movements in the Middle East, Bisri and Staquf's rechristening of the Islam Nusantara initiative was a response to the opportunities presented by the election of Joko Widodo to the Indonesian presidency in July 2014. Their course of action also reflected the two men's conviction that, as Staquf told me in 2018 and again in January 2023, there was both an opportunity and need to project Indonesian Islam's image and influence abroad. In his 2014 campaign and again in 2018, President Jokowi had courted the NU vote, convinced that his prospects for support were greater in the NU community than among Indonesia's modernists and Islamists.

Rather than reflecting a majority sentiment within the NU organization, then, it was the desire to use the political opportunity presented by Jokowi's election to counteract exclusivist currents in Indonesian society that led the leadership of Nahdlatul Ulama and its youth wing, Ansor, to undertake a series of vanguardist initiatives after 2014. The first of these took place on May 9 and 10, 2016, when NU hosted an International Summit of Moderate Islamic leaders in Jakarta; the event drew a select group of four hundred Muslim scholars from more than thirty nations. At the summit's close, the NU Central Board issued a sixteen-point declaration. The statement decried the growth of Islamist extremism around the world and appealed to "people of good will of every faith and nation to join in building a global consensus not to politicize Islam" and to work together "to bring about a world in which Islam, and Muslims, are truly beneficent and contribute to the well being of all humanity" (Nahdlatul Ulama 2016:2).

Three days later, the Ansor Movement joined with the Bayt ar-Rahmah organization to issue a three-page statement calling

> for an end to conflict in the name of religion, and for qualified *ulama* . . . to carefully examine and address those elements of fiqh . . . that encourage segregation, discrimination, and/or violence towards those perceived to be "non-Muslim."

After a conference of 300 scholars held at a *pesantren* in Jombang, East Java, on May 22, 2017, the Ansor leadership issued what has come to be known as the Ansor Declaration on Humanitarian Islam. In this 8,000-word document, the organization called for Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh)* to be transformed so as to align with the "higher aims of the shariah" (*maqasid al-shariah*), in a manner able to "reflect the

constantly shifting circumstances of life on earth" (Baytarrahmah 2017; see also Gerakan Pemuda Ansor and Bayt ar-Rahmah 2018). The declaration decried what it described as the "disjunction between key tenets of Islamic orthodoxy and the reality of contemporary civilization." It then added:

> Among the complex issues that lie at the heart of this discrepancy are . . . normative practices governing relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. . . . Social and political instability, civil war, and terrorism all arise from the attempt by ultraconservative Muslims to implement certain elements of *fiqh* within a context that is no longer compatible with said classical norms. . . . Any attempt to establish a universal Islamic state . . . will only lead to disaster for Muslims.
>
> *(Baytarrahmah 2017)*

In late October of 2018, the Ansor youth movement held a Second Global Unity Forum in Yogyakarta. At the end of the conference the organizers issued a forty-page document that has come to be known as the *Nusantara Manifesto* (Gerakan Pemuda Ansor and Bayt ar-Rahmah 2018). Among its core declarations, the manifesto called for NU as well as Muslims around the world to revise "obsolete and problematic . . . elements within Islamic orthodoxy that lend themselves to tyranny" so as to "foster the emergence of a global civilization endowed with nobility of character."[3] On January 3, 2019, the Ansor Youth movement convened a meeting of seventy Muslim scholars that again appealed for a global reformulation of Islamic jurisprudence in line with what the declaration's formulators described as an "Islamic jurisprudence for a single, interfused global civilization" (*fiqh al-hadarah al-alamiyah al-mutasahirah*" (see Lohlker 2021:204). At the NU Congress (Muktamar) I attended in Surabaya in February 2023, Gus Yahya and his colleagues brought together several hundred specialists of Islamic law from across the Muslim-majority world, in what was described as an effort to internationalize the campaign to reform Islamic jurisprudence, not least with regard to non-Muslims and citizenship.

The 16,000-word Nusantara Manifesto of October 25, 2018, provides the clearest and most definitive summary of these legal and inclusivist initiatives. It makes clear that one of the movement's primary objectives is to revise those "tenets of classical Islamic law . . . which are premised upon perpetual conflict with those who do not embrace or submit to Islam" (p. 4). As an example of such enmity the Manifesto cites the 2016–17 campaign against the Christian Chinese governor Ahok and his subsequent conviction on blasphemy charges. It decries such campaigns as examples of "the weaponization of religion and its abuse for political purposes." It also emphasizes that such efforts are the instruments of "extremist groups that reject the existence of Indonesia as a multi-religious and pluralistic nation state" and that claim "to have a monopoly on the correct interpretation and practice of Islam" (5).

In response to such anti-pluralist developments, the Manifesto states, all Indonesians must work "to re-enliven the pluralistic and tolerant values that lie at the heart of Indonesia's national consensus" and "to revitalize the understanding and practice of religion as *rahmah* (universal love and compassion)" (5). Several pages later the document declares that a key to this revitalization is the deepening commitment to "Nusantara civilization." A "key element" of the latter is

> the ability not only to grasp but also *prioritize* [emphasis in original] . . . the spiritual essence of religion, rather than purely formal and dogmatic elements that readily lend themselves to weaponization and . . . foster conflict rather than social unity.
>
> *(p. 18)*

The document emphasizes that Nusantara society's

> impulse to position spiritual wisdom, rather than dogma, as the central pillar of socio-cultural, religious and political life . . . enables Nusantara civilization to embrace the essence of newly arrived religions; neutralize their potentially divisive effects; and transform religious pluralism into a source of social unity and strength. . . . By fostering social harmony and peaceful co-existence among and between those of widely varying ethnicities, cultures and faiths, religion served Nusantara inhabitants as a path to attain spiritual nobility, rather than a pragmatic means to claim privilege and/or supremacy vis-à-vis others.
>
> *(p. 18)*

Anticipating the theme at the heart of the February 2023 Congress in Surabaya, the declaration then makes a direct appeal to the national and international community of Islamic scholars: "changed circumstances necessitate new *ijtihad* to ensure the well-being of humanity" in accordance with the higher aims (*maqasid*) of the shariah. In short,

> it is essential . . . that Muslim scholars (*ulama*), political elites, intellectuals, educators and other opinion leaders summon the courage necessary to explicitly state that changing circumstances require the revision of certain historically determined and now obsolete elements of Islamic law.
>
> *(p. 28)*

It goes without saying that, notwithstanding a certain hyperbolic rhetoric, these Nusantara initiatives are less an expression of an already existing consensus on "tolerance" in NU or Indonesian society than they are an appeal to bring national and organizational realities into closer conformity with the ideals of an as-yet-unrealized culture of pluralism and democracy. In January and February of 2022, I was invited to participate in three-hour-long Zoom sessions with the two main

architects of the Nusantara and Bayt ar-rahma initiative, Kyai Haji Cholil Staquf (executive director of Nahdlatul Ulama), and C. Holland Taylor. Taylor is a retired American business executive and a convert to Islam who serves as an international representative for NU; he is also a cofounder of the Home of Divine Grace for Revealing and Nurturing Islam as a Blessing for All Creation (*Bayt ar-Rahmah li ad-Da'wa al Islamiyahah Rahmatan li al'Alamin*"). As Taylor's website explains, the Home of Divine Grace is "a U.S.-based religious corporation that will serve as a hub for the expansion of NU operations worldwide" (see also Johnson and Taylor 2021).

Taylor had been a close confidant and friend of former President Wahid since the late 1990s and had collaborated with Wahid and others in 2003 to establish the LibForAll Foundation. The latter was created "to help meet international peace and security needs in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and the first Bali bombing." One of the LibForAll Foundation's first actions was to publish a book edited by President Wahid with a prologue by the late Ahmad Syafi'i Maarif (then chair of the Maarif Institute and former chair of Muhammadiyah), and KH A Mustofa Bisri. Titled *Ilusi Negara Islam* (*The Illusion of an Islamic State*), the book provided a spirited theological defense of Indonesia's tradition of Pancasila pluralism, while decrying those in Indonesia calling for the establishment of an Islamic state (Wahid 2009).

The details of these initiatives aside, one of the most striking aspects of these Nusantara initiatives is that the leadership of NU and Bayt ar-Rahmah launched them, not because they believed that the efforts' affirmation of Pancasila plurality and democracy reflected majority opinion in NU or Indonesia but because they were concerned about growing trends toward anti-pluralist intolerance in Indonesian society and their own organizations. In their conversations with me in early 2022 and again at the Surabaya Congress in February 2023, both Staquf and Taylor stated clearly that all of the Ansor declarations had been crafted by a select group of Islam Nusantara intellectuals and activists. In a follow-up conversation on March 16, 2022, I pressed Taylor on just how much support there is in rank-and-file NU circles for these proposals. I asked in particular whether the Nusantara appeals for a far-reaching reform of "obsolete" aspects of Islamic jurisprudence had been put to any kind of vote among the NU rank and file. My suspicion was that there had been no such vote, and, had there been, the proposals might *not* have won the support of NU rank and file. Taylor responded,

> KH Cholil [Staquf] and his colleagues in Ansor worked long and hard to win over the executive leadership [some 600 individuals] of both Ansor and NU to the call for a far-reaching reform of anti-pluralist legacies in Islamic legal traditions. But they didn't put the matter to any kind of popular vote.

He added, "[T]hat's not how NU works, and, had there been a vote, there would only have been a good deal of confusion and unhelpful opposition."

Staquf and Taylor's comments with regard to the way in which vanguard leaders shape public opinion in NU were, in my view, both intellectually honest and sociologically accurate. In keeping with the legacy of traditionalist Islam with its emphasis on the leadership and expertise of recognized religious scholars (*ulama*), the role of an NU scholar or leader is not to reflect majority opinion but to guide and redirect it. In other words, the culture of participation in NU circles is not that of democratic reflectionism, as Mietzner and Muhtadi's (2020) otherwise insightful analysis of NU public opinion assumes. It is instead a variety of ethical and epistemological vanguardism. The latter tack utilizes the prestige and authority of religious leaders not to express the will of the majority but to pull the broader Muslim or NU public toward values and commitments that it might otherwise be unwilling to accept. In other words, and in a manner that contrasts with the narrowing of Islamic horizons that characterizes exclusivist Islamists' epistemological populism, epistemological vanguardism attempts to use the authority and importance of the scholarly leadership to press for acceptance of often hard-to-accept viewpoints. The latter are often contentious precisely because they are *not* derived from rank-and-file culture but reflect a scholarly or political elite's efforts to fuse the horizons of once separate intellectual worlds, in this case those of Islamic ethical thinking and civil democratic pluralism.

It goes without saying that, as a method for shaping public opinion, ethical vanguardism has its risks, not least in a society as agonistically plural as Indonesia. One risk is that identity politics and political-economic interests may tempt some in the Muslim public to find the appeals of Islamic populists more resonant and compelling than those of the vanguard pluralists. In my conversations with them at the 2023 Surabaya Congress, both KH Staquf and Taylor made clear that they were deeply aware of this danger. They also pointed to their (and my) dear friend, the late Abdurrahman Wahid, as an example of an epistemological vanguardist who, in the end, had not been able to convince even all of his NU followers of the propriety and wisdom of pluralist ways.

All this said, the Ansor and NU leadership's bold efforts to bring about a far-reaching reform of Islamic ethics and jurisprudence through a variety of epistemological vanguardism is an example of public-ethical constructivism that is, in fact, widespread in many religious and civilizational traditions. Such efforts at ethical transformation are not intended to reflect majority opinion but to correct it in light of some perceived higher standard. Such a principled attitude lay at the heart, for example, of Martin Luther King's visionary appeals for Christian charity, citizen dignity, and a deepened process of ethical reasoning in the face of the United States' populist legacy of racial supremacism (Shelby and Terry 2018). Here, as in other efforts of inclusivist reform in Muslim lands, the higher standard is one that builds on a synthesis of *maqasid* reasoning and civil democratic values. Herein lays both the achievement and the precarity of inclusivist Muslim ethical reform in Indonesia today.

Conclusion: From Shariah-Mindedness to Civic Pluralist Reform

These developments with regard to the politics and plurality of shariah ethics in contemporary Indonesia point to several conclusions. Most fundamentally, one consequence of the current wave of growing Islamic observance in Indonesia is that a large number of Muslims have concluded that the observance of scriptural and shariah-based rules is a necessary and important part of their profession of Islam. However, even as the conviction has grown that the proper profession of Islam requires a prioritization of something called shariah, the questions of just what the latter's ethical priorities really are and who has the right to define them have become only more contentious.

Seen from the perspective of this normative history, we can appreciate that one of the more decisive questions as regards the future of democracy and citizen belonging in Indonesia concerns the question of through what political procedures and under whose authority public discussions of ethical priorities are to be resolved. One of the most striking features of shariah politics in the post-Suharto period is that, although the proponents of state-enforced shariah have been repeatedly rebuffed, some have been able to exercise influence by trading support for local political bosses (most of whom are not of Islamist persuasion) for influence in the crafting of shariah bylaws (see Buehler 2016) or, as in the campaign against Governor Ahok, through collaborations with powerful politicians and oligarchs (Hadiz 2018; Mietzner 2017).

The striking of deals with oligarchs and party bosses is commonplace in modern populist polities everywhere, including in Western democracies. Such transactional practices were also key features of authoritarian political developments in late modern Sudan and Iran. In the latter countries actors with authoritarian understandings of shariah law made their way to power, despite widespread opposition to the details of their proposals on matters of citizenship and governance (see An-Na'im 2008:232; Bayat 2017; Vikor 2005). In Indonesia, such uncivil collaborations across the state society divide have also allowed political entrepreneurs to "carry over" exclusivist and anti-egalitarian values and attitudes from society (e.g., resentment of Chinese, frustration with continuing structural inequalities) back into intra-Muslim debates over how to understand and implement Islam's ethical commands in a modern society.

This last point touches on what may be decisive for the future of Islamic public ethics and citizen belonging in Indonesia. It is not the breadth of theological or jurisprudential divides that presents the greatest challenge to Indonesian Islam in the post-Suharto period. It is the task of building a political, legal, and public-ethical framework with sufficient legitimacy and reward to continue to bring the majority of citizens to a democracy-reinforcing and citizen-affirming center. The challenge is to demonstrate the real-world benefits of an egalitarian and inclusive interpretation of social citizenship on the basis of a reformed and egalitarian understanding of Islam's higher ethical aims (*maqasid al-shariah)*.

Notwithstanding the violence of the early post-Suharto period, the results of Indonesia's elections suggest that key parts of such a consensus have been put in place. They can be seen in the still high estimation Indonesians have for electoral democracy and the Pancasila tradition of multireligious nationalism. However, as the 2016–17 campaign against Governor Ahok showed, public opinion remains vulnerable to exclusivist understandings of Islamic values, not least on matters of citizen belonging. The vulnerability may be especially consequential where those initiatives carry over long-standing grievances over matters like political and economic inequality into efforts to interpret Islam's higher aims in an exclusive and inegalitarian manner (see Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019; Hadiz 2016).

To state the matter differently, one of the greatest challenges to Indonesian democracy and the Muslim public's search for a reformed public ethics is, and will likely continue to be, the pervasiveness of structural inequalities and clientelist deal-making that make it appear as if democracy is "for sale" for oligarchs and others with capital on hand (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019; Ford and Pepinsky 2014). In short, and not without some irony, one of the keys to an enduring and inclusive reformation of Muslim public ethics in Indonesia will be not Muslim politics per se but the ability of the country's religious-minded leaders to make good on democratic Islam's promise of human flourishing to be shared by all citizens. One of the greatest obstacles to an even preliminary realization of this dream will in turn remain the activities of political and economic elites eager to protect their interests by pitting an essentialized identity politics against an inclusive and egalitarian understanding of Islam and the modern dream of a multireligious Indonesia.

Notes

1 With its long history of struggle against outside rule, Aceh in northwestern Sumatra is a special case in Indonesia's shariah politics; its full analysis would require a longer discussion than space allows in this book. At the dawn of the Indonesian republic in 1945, *ulama* played a role in Acehnese politics greater than any other region in Indonesia. The *ulama* also insisted that the implementation of shariah was a precondition for their region joining the new republic. However, early on Indonesia's leaders made clear they had no intention of allowing the implementation of Islamic law in the territory. In the 1950s, a rebellion against Jakarta featured enforcement of Islamic law as a core demand. But the revolt's collapse in the early 1960s undermined *ulama* power and put the shariah campaign on hold. During the New Order, a government-created council managed to co-opt most *ulama* even as political resistance to Jakarta's authority surged. With the end of the New Order in May 1998, an alliance of religious students and rural *ulama* established a new *ulama* body and called again for the implementation of Islamic law. Locked in a bitter armed conflict with the Indonesian military, the Free Aceh Independence Movement (GAM) regarded the *ulama* organization warily and never endorsed its demand for the implementation of Islamic law. In an effort to win the favor of the *ulama* and undercut support for the rebels, in 1999 the central government passed a law (No. 44/1999) recognizing Aceh's special status. Two years later, Law 18/2001 on Special Autonomy went further, authorizing the establishment of shariah courts. The law portrays Aceh's shariah courts as part of the national court system and thus subject to Supreme Court review. However, Aceh's Council of Ulama (MPU) has insisted that the region's special

status allows a fuller array of shariah laws (*qanun*) than the national system allows. In 2002, Acehnese authorities passed regulations banning Shi'ism, the Ahmadiyah sect, and Mu'tazila rationalists. Groups and individuals identified as "deviationist" are also subject to corporal punishment and prison. The drinking of alcohol and illicit proximity (*khalwat*) among unmarried males and females are punished by caning. Some religious leaders have proposed imposing the poll tax (*jizya*) on non-Muslims in the province. On September 14, 2009, the outgoing parliament of Aceh passed legislation making adultery punishable by stoning to death. The law was a direct challenge to the incoming Aceh Party, which has roots in the Free Aceh movement and had been swept to power in elections a few weeks earlier. Although careful not to take on the *ulama*, the Aceh Party was opposed to strict-constructionist implementation of Islamic law. On the history and current situation of shariah in Aceh, see Bowen 2003; Feener 2013, 2016; Hooker 2008:246–64; and Salim 2008:143–67.

2 Interview, Tangerang Women's Coalition, November 3, 2008.

3 Gerakan Pemuda Ansor and Bayt ar-Rahmah, *The Nusantara Manifesto*, adopted through a Joint Resolution and Decree signed by both organizations on October 25, 2018, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Published in *Hasil-Hasil Musyawarah Nasional 'Alim Ulama Nahdlatul Ulama 2019* (*Findings of the 2019 National Conference of Nahdlatul Ulama Religious Scholars*), Jakarta: Nahdlatul Ulama Central Board. See also Gerakan Pemuda Ansor 2021.

8

CONCLUSION

The Quest for an Inclusive Public Ethics

In foregrounding ethical aspects of modern social change in Indonesia, this book has not sought to argue that ethical matters are more causally determinative than other forces in politics and social life. My aim here has been different. The first reason for this book's emphasis on ways of knowing and enacting Islamic public ethics and citizen belonging has been to counteract the security-first approaches that have dominated and disfigured so many Western discussions of Muslims and politics and so impoverished public understandings of Islam and Muslims. The approach adopted in this book thus aims to respond affirmatively to Wael Hallaq's compelling injunction that once and for all we put aside reductionist accounts of Islam and Muslim society by recognizing "the continuing commitment of today's Muslims to the central domain of the moral" (Hallaq 2013:169).

This book's core aim, then, has been to underscore an important and pervasive concern among modern Muslim thinkers and activists. The Muslim political philosopher Muqtedar Khan speaks for the broader community of modern Muslim scholars, when he observes, "Ethical actions are what Islam is about, not some imaginary just outcome regardless of how one arrives at it" (Khan 2019:249). In much the same spirit, the scholar and public intellectual Ebrahim Moosa has remarked,

> The premier challenge for practitioners of modern Muslim ethics is one of epistemology. How does knowledge of the present shape an ethics of Muslims today so that it comports to and synchronizes with their lived experiences? . . . A search for a new ethics might have to go beyond the reading of texts and involve a fairly sophisticated study and understanding of the social context in which Muslims find themselves.
>
> *(Moosa 2014:52)*

DOI: 10.4324/9781032629155-8

In a manner resonant with approaches to Islamic knowledge and ethics emphasized in this book, the European Muslim scholar, Tariq Ramadan, has written similarly:

> It cannot be enough to rely on scriptural sources to examine the relationship between human knowledge . . . and applied ethics: the Universe, Nature, and the knowledge related to them must assuredly be integrated into the process through which the higher objectives and ethical goals (*al- maqâsid*) of Islam's general message can be established.
>
> *(Ramadan 2009:4)*

While moving ethical knowledge and practice to the center of discussion, this book has also sought to make clear that ethical concerns exercise what force they have in societies, not just because those concerns are "there" in Islamic tradition but because the most urgent among them are drawn into and thoroughly "entangled with" (Latour 1993; Lempert 2013) the coalitions and assemblages through which those values are produced, reproduced, and changed over time. This is to say, then, that the public ethics operative in a society like Indonesia is not governed by a fixed and narrow set of scriptural rules or some faculty of subjective judgment alone but "draws on a *heterogeneous* set of psychological and sociological resources" (Keane 2016:25; Peletz 2013). As Kuru has emphasized in his celebrated study of the political economy of Muslim ethics and knowledge in the Middle East (Kuru 2019a), and as Vedi Hadiz (2016, 2018) has emphasized here in Indonesia, the entanglements in question include the class coalitions and assemblages put in place during certain critical junctures in a society's development, and through which a particular variety of public ethics and citizen belonging is made politically ascendant over others.

To state the matter differently, and in contrast to more singularly intellectualist studies of Islamic "thought," I have sought in this book to explore Muslim Indonesian ethical traditions by exploring their "dispersive" (Bowen 1993:10) contingencies in society and politics. However *experienced* by individuals as an "unconditional ought" (Beldo 2014), ethical norms, like those at the heart of citizen belonging, emerge and evolve in interaction with the structures, powers, and traditions of knowledge operative in and across societies (cf. Peletz 2013, 2020; Vikor 2005). With specific regard to Islamic ethical traditions, these facts underscore that Islamic *ethics* is not uniquely grounded in scripture but emerges in interaction with social, political, and religious structures and contentions in society (cf. Ali 2006; Hadiz 2016; Moosa 2001; Peletz 2013).

In several important respects, then, the approach that I have deployed in this book builds on the pioneering scholarship of the anthropologist Talal Asad (1986:7) with regard to Islam as a "discursive tradition." As noted in Chapter 1 of this book, Asad emphasized that as a discursive tradition Islam is intimately involved "with the formation of moral selves, the manipulation of populations, . . . and the production of appropriate knowledges." In the case of Muslim civilization, Asad observed, the

ethico-legal traditions known as shariah often play an especially important role in this process of knowledge-, morality-, and subjectivity-making. However, as Asad quickly added, the shariah and all other Islamic ethical traditions have never been homogeneous, and "there has never been any Muslim society in which the religious law of Islam has governed more than a fragment of social life" (Asad 1986:13; cf. Hefner 2016a; Zubaida 2003).

Although the idea that public ethics and citizen belonging in all societies are organizationally entangled and thus historically contingent may appear self-evident, this fact has often been overlooked in discussions of politics and citizenship across societies. As the anthropologist James Laidlaw has noted, Western liberal philosophers often assume that an actor's acceptance of a particular ethical value is the result of an individual's deliberating on her own so as to judge the value in question as consistent with the standards of a universally applicable "reason" (Laidlaw 2014:1). The ascendance of Kantian varieties of ethical theory to a paramount position in modern liberal philosophy led to "a dominant view in modern Western philosophy that emphasized obligations and blame and assumed they must be based on a wholly consistent system of highly general principles that should apply to all people regardless of their identities or circumstances" (Keane 2016:17–18). Some years ago, the philosopher Bernard Williams (1985) referred to this abstract and disencumbered view of ethics as a "morality system." Like the ethical philosophers Michael Sandel (1984) and Charles Taylor (2004, 1992), and like Hallaq (2013), Williams also argued that this model amounts to an impoverished understanding of the genealogy of ethical concerns in social life (see also Keane 2016). This book has built on and sought to extend this insight.

With a comparable degree of oversimplification but drawing on a different analytical tradition, sociologists and anthropologists in the Durkheimian and Boasian traditions assume that a person's membership in a community is sufficient to guarantee her identification with and internalization of that tradition's values in a more or less uniform way. As Laidlaw (2014:26) has remarked, the default view in both of these theoretical traditions is to presuppose the operation of a totalizing and "effective cultural indoctrination and complete uniformity of values," with "no ethically significant choices, . . . no . . . reflective self-evaluation." Such an approach to the ethical is the opposite of the ethico-political plurality and contentious prioritization we have witnessed at the heart of politics and citizen belonging here in Indonesia.

In a similarly well-intended but reductionist vein, specialists of Islamic legal and ethical traditions have sometimes assumed that because a person or group self-identifies as Muslim, the sources to which they look for moral hope and social guidance must also be, in some totalizing and invariant manner, "Islamic." In commenting on this state of affairs with regard to the anthropology of Islam, the Germany-based scholar Samuli Schielke has commented, "[T]here is too much Islam in the anthropology of Islam." By this he means scholars have not paid sufficient attention to "the inconsistencies and openness of people's lives that never

fit into the framework of a single tradition" (Schielke 2010b:1; cf. Deeb and Harb 2013; Peletz 2020). In his study of Islam from the Balkans to Bengal, the late historian, Shahab Ahmed, made a similar point. He emphasized that the "historical and human phenomenon that is Islam" has always been characterized by "capaciousness, complexity, and . . . outright contradiction" (Ahmed 2016:6).

More recently, anthropologists of morality have elaborated insights like these in a more sustained theoretical manner, one that has also informed the approach to Indonesian realities adopted in this book. They have emphasized that "all societies including small-scale societies, have a plurality of institutional moralities," with the result that the ethical traditions operative in society should never be assumed to be "total and unified" (Zigon 2010:3). In his study of moral life among young people in Alexandria, Egypt in the aftermath of the 2011 uprisings, Schielke has provided a particularly vivid illustration of this life-world plurality. His study emphasizes that in contemporary Egypt actors' sources of moral "hope and certainty" are neither unitary nor consistent but draw on multiple and contradictory "senses of a good life" (Schielke 2015:11). Over the course of their daily lives, the young Egyptians he came to know cycled through a variety of "modalities of morality" or "registers," rarely achieving any more than a "temporary, situational" degree of consistency or coherence. "In practice, they more often than not live a life of many ambiguities, shifting between at times opposed moments and outlooks of life, being firmly something at one time and strictly something else at another time" (Schielke 2015:53, 57). Schielke summarizes the resulting ethical complexity in the following manner:

> The same people believe in the absolute truth of Islam, search for a base for sound moral conduct, desire and crave, fall in love, try to move up the social ladder, aspire to a life of comfortable middle-class consumerism, oppose the 'system' of political economy, compare their situation with those in the wider world, believe in Egypt's supremacy over other nations, want to forget their worries and live in the moment, feel bored and frustrated, and do what they can to realize a life of dignity.
>
> *(Schielke 2015:3)*

Schielke's approach to morality and society is one that is broadly based in the phenomenological wing of social anthropology. It takes as its point of departure not a systemic or structural analysis but an actor-based emphasis on the "existential grounds of action and imagination" (ibid.:12). However, other anthropologists, and the author of the present book, have emphasized that while social imaginaries in all societies may comprise multiple ethical registers, the most important of these currents are never entirely siloed one from the other, and actors don't move from one register to another without some degree of carry-over reflection. Different registers – like those operative in the marketplace, political life, or the religious field – may also be made broadly resonant because they enjoy the support

of powerful social classes and elites (Hadiz 2018; Kuru 2019a). As the anthropologist Gregory M. Simon has emphasized in his study of moral selfhood and Islam in Minangkabau, Indonesia, actors often engage the diverse traditions "to help think through and manage . . . dimensions of personhood and capacities of human selves" (Simon 2014:3). As they do so, and as they move from one social sphere to another, "tensions between values and experiences follow." As a result, rather than living in a state of total ethical ambivalence, actors and entire social movements carry over and integrate values from one sphere into another (ibid.:5–6). It is just such a process that we have seen operating at both the subjective and societal level here in Indonesia.

In their pathbreaking study of Shi'i Muslims and leisure practices in contemporary south Beirut, Lebanon, anthropologists Lara Deeb and Mona Harb make a related set of observations. Like Schielke, the authors point out that moral life in Muslim societies (and all others) is defined not by a single, hyper-rationalized moral discourse but by a plurality of registers or (in their phrase) "rubrics" (Deeb and Harb 2013:18–19). Each rubric conveys a distinctive "categorical guide or source of guidance" (ibid.:19). Deeb and Harb pay particular attention to the ethical rubrics dominant in three spheres: politics, society, and Islamic observance. Whereas Schielke highlights a plurality of registers marked by relatively little integration, Deeb and Harb emphasize that "[w]ithin each register of moral discussion and action, certain values emerge as primary" (ibid.). No less significant, and in a manner that recalls Simon's and this book's arguments on ethical carryovers, Deeb and Harb emphasize that in engaging the values and practices of one social field, actors may carry back some of its values and sensibilities into the understanding and practice of others. Here in Indonesia, public ethics and citizen belonging, as well as educational and gender practices, have long been marked by just such processes of carrying-over and cross-fertilization. In Indonesia and the broader Muslim world, dialogical processes of this sort have also given rise to calls for the reform of Islamic legal traditions through their integrative engagement with other traditions of knowledge and value (Hallaq 2013; Zubaida 2003; see also Basarudin 2016).

For reasons related to the ways in which the various waves of Islamization unfolded across the Indonesian archipelago (Chapters 2, 4, and 6), the ethical landscape in this country has long been influenced by political, social, and gender orders significantly different from those in the Middle East. As a result, normative "carry overs" from such realities as class structures, state politics, and gender roles were often different from those seen in the more tribal, patriarchal, and state-centralized world of the medieval Middle East. In this regard, the Muslim archipelago was never a "shariah society" in the sense so insightfully captured in Brinkley Messick's (1988) ethnohistory of Yemen. Madrasas offering systematic instruction in Islamic jurisprudence made their appearance in the Indonesian archipelago only four centuries after the first recorded wave of conversion to Islam (Chapters 3 and 5). During the first centuries of conversion to Islam, there was little of the settled

hierarchy of Islamic scholars and commoners drawn into the task of socializing a public understanding of the law through various processes of "vulgarization" (Messick 1988:639; cf. Berkey 2003). The result was that, during these first centuries, Islamic ethics in the Indonesian archipelago had a less legalistic disposition than was the case in much of the Muslim Middle East. The less legalistic emphasis had especially significant implications for gender relations and women's lives, as well as state politics, social class, and citizen belonging (Chapters 6 and 7).

The less legalistic disposition of Islamic ethics in the Indonesian archipelago underwent dramatic changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. That period was marked by the rapid spread of Islamic boarding schools promoting the study of the Qur'an, the Sunna of the Prophet, and an Islamic jurisprudence that drew extensively on Middle Eastern and South Asian precedents (Chapters 3 and 6). However, a striking feature of the history of Islamic education in the archipelago was that no sooner had these institutions of traditionalist learning (*pesantren*) been put in place than they were joined by and challenged in Muslim society by modernist institutions of Islamic education (Hefner 2009) The latter were grounded in a different social milieu and class structure. They also promulgated a different sense as to what Muslim knowledge and values should be prioritized in a world of modern capitalism, Western imperialism, and cosmopolitan social imaginaries (Chapter 5). The educational institutions created by reform-minded Indonesians in groups like the Muhammadiyah carried over elements of general ("secular") education into educational programs deemed no less Islamic than those promoted in traditionalist circles. Eventually many traditionalist scholars in groups like Nahdlatul Ulama came to agree with this progress-minded view. Modernist pedagogy also emphasized the education of girls and women (Chapter 6). No less important, modernist education carried over insights from the social and natural "sciences of the world" into believers' understandings of what God has revealed to really matter. As a result of these and other processes, Islamic education in early to mid-twentieth-century Indonesia implemented reforms that would become widespread in other Muslim-majority lands only decades later (Hefner 2007, 2009a).

In this same critical "age of movement" (Shiraishi 1990), both Muslim traditionalists and modernists found themselves challenged by secular and socialist varieties of Indonesian nationalism. Once again, however, rather than shutting themselves off from these new social currents, Muslim Indonesians engaged in richly reflexive and dialogical acts of public deliberation. They eventually carried over select elements of the socialist and secular nationalist agenda into their Islamic projects of ethico-political revitalization (Lin 2018, 2023; McVey 1965). One striking consequence of this imbrication was that the great majority of Indonesian Muslims rallied to the twin projects of national independence and multireligious citizenship. Some did so, however, with adjustments or qualifications to the democratic program, such as the stipulation that positions of national leadership should be reserved for Muslims. One especially striking example of the ongoing imbrication of nationalist ideals with Islamic public ethics was that, when constructing the

modern political category of the citizen, the great majority of Muslim leaders and scholars put aside the classical *fiqh* categories of "protected minorities" (*ahl al-dhimmi*; see Chapters 2 and 4) and "people of the book" (*ahl al-kitab*). In place of these classical legal models, Muslim Indonesians rallied to vernacularized models of multireligious citizenship and national belonging (Chapter 2).

Neither syncretism nor greater "tolerance," it is the scale of these engagements with and carryovers from varied cosmopolitan currents like modern nationalism that has long been the most striking feature of Islamic ways of knowing and belonging in Indonesia. It goes without saying that, at times, political competition of a fiercely agonistic sort diminished the Indonesian genius for recognition and integration across traditions. The diminution was especially pronounced during the bitter *aliran* rivalries of the late 1950s and early 1960s (Geertz 1960a; James and Schrauwers 2004; Madinier 2015). In those years, a loose assortment of Muslim political parties and social movements competed with socialist, secular nationalist, and communist political organizations at every level of society from the nation's capital down into remote villages (Feith 1963). The intensity of the competition weakened the Indonesian Muslim disposition toward epistemological openness; identity politics ran roughshod over cultural capaciousness and civic inclusivity. Combined with the rise of a powerful armed forces, the contest also paved the way for the horrific mass killings in the aftermath of an attempted leftist coup the night of September 30–October 1, 1965 (Robinson 2018; Roosa 2006). By 1965–6, Indonesia looked like one of the Muslim world's nations least likely to develop the intellectual and institutional endowments required for cultural vitality, economic dynamism, and inclusive citizen belonging.

However, over the next two decades, and well in advance of the return to electoral democracy in 1998–9, Muslim society in Indonesia recovered its aspiration and capacity for epistemological and ethical dynamism. Here again the causal entanglements in play were complex and did not concern Islam or Muslims alone. Notwithstanding its foundational violence, the authoritarian New Order state committed itself to building schools, expanding health care, and sponsoring an authoritarian-developmentalist but sustained process of economic growth. As has been the case in so many "modernizing" societies, including those in the West, the subsequent confluence of events had unintended consequences. Although the New Order state promoted a repressively patriarchal model of gender relations, girls and young women rushed to take advantage of expanding educational opportunities – eventually bringing their literacy rates and achievements in middle and higher education on par with those of their male counterparts (Chapter 6). By comparison with their sisters in the Muslim Middle East, a far greater number of educated women went on after marriage to pursue employment opportunities outside the home. Although gender conservatives have pushed back against equality-minded reforms, their efforts have for the most part had an only modest effect on these overall patterns of female achievement. Even in democratic Islamist circles like those associated with the PKS (Chapter 4; Permata and Kailani 2009), gender

ideals in general, and normativities with regard to women and girls in particular, have undergone accommodative shifts so that egalitarian and companionate models of masculinity and femininity have become increasingly influential (Machmudi 2021; Rinaldo 2013; Smith-Hefner 2019).

In formal politics too, the distinctively Indonesian disposition for civilizational openness and epistemological eclecticism has remained strong. Although it sponsored extensive educational reforms in the Muslim educational sector (Chapter 5), the New Order regime wanted nothing of reform-minded Muslim educators' interest in democracy, citizen equality, and social justice. Working within but also at counter-currents to the state-mandated program, however, Muslim educators and public intellectuals from the 1980s onward lent their support to a campaign to convince the broader Muslim public of the compatibility of pluralist democracy with modern Muslim ethics (Abdillah 1997; Kersten 2015; Wisdom 2022). However incomplete the transition, Indonesia's return to electoral democracy in 1998–9 would not have been possible without the tireless labors of these Muslim intellectuals in associations like Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, as well as the discourse coalitions they put in place (Abdillah 1997; Latif 2008).

From the start of the 1998–9 transition, there were ethico-political contradictions and countercurrents. First and foremost, and as many political analysts have underscored (Aspinall 2015; Bourchier 2019; Diprose, McRae, and Hadiz 2019; Warburton and Aspinall 2019), much of the New Order political-economic establishment, including many of its oligarchs, remained securely in place. These elites adjusted nimbly to the wheeling and dealing of the new democratic era, both in the provinces and in the capital (Chapter 2). Their survival has been a major influence on what has been described as the decline or regression in the quality of democracy in contemporary Indonesia (Harsono 2012). At times, too, some among these carryover patrons have lent their support to anti-democratic and anti-pluralist currents in the exclusivist Islamist community (Bourchier 2019; Schäfer 2019; Warburton and Aspinall 2019). Such interventions played a major role in the rise of the FPI and the 2016–17 campaign against the Christian Chinese Governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnomo (Chapter 4). One contrast speaks legions in this regard: exclusivist Islamists unwilling to make deals with political-economic oligarchs, like those associated with the MMI (Chapter 4), failed to achieve the mobilizational momentum enjoyed by oligarch-allying militias like Habib Rizieq's FPI (see Hadiz 2018, 2019; Wilson 2015).

There was another and no less important dimension to the contentions unfolding in Indonesia's Muslim community in the *Reformasi* period. As in many other parts of the Muslim-majority world (Eickelman 1992), the confluence of modern mass education, popular pietization, and the pluralization of religious authority brought with it questions as to how to know and practice Islam and just how a revitalized practice should carry over into relations with fellow Indonesians, including non-Muslims. In the aftermath of the Islamic awakening of the 1980s and 1990s, activists of exclusivist Islamist persuasion – the great majority not "extremist" but

nonviolent and willing to work within the framework of the Indonesian nation-state – concluded that the ethical plurality seen in Indonesian society was not an inevitable or (least of all) welcome feature of modern social living. Nor was it an example of the ethical and epistemological plurality for which classical Islamic traditions had always made room (Ahmed 2016; Bowen 2003; Hallaq 2013). Activists of exclusivist persuasion regarded social and intellectual plurality of this sort as an obstacle to a comprehensive profession of Islam.

Animated by this conviction, exclusivist Islamists sought to extend the reach of what they called shariah law into public and private life (Hasyim 2011; Tibi 2013:2–3, 70–4). They conceived the shariah tradition, not as an entity requiring insight and contextualization but as unchanging and totalizing. Some among these shariah activists operated in a grassroots manner and, as in the Egyptian piety movement Saba Mahmood (2005) has described, abjured any interest in the capture and "Islamization" of the state. Still others – a growing number in recent years – accommodated themselves to much if not all of the new democratic order (Machmudi 2021). Some even concluded that the nation-state is a legitimate form of political organization and that many features of electoral democracy are consistent with Islam (Chaplin 2018). In other instances, however, Islamists of a more exclusivist persuasion sought to tether their ambitions to high-ranking state leaders and oligarchs (see Bayat 2017:147; Bourchier 2019; Hadiz 2018).

Whatever their precise political genealogy, these movements' demands for Muslim publics and the Indonesian nation-state to submit to an ostensibly unitary shariah law put Muslim and non-Muslim proponents of inclusive citizen belonging on the defensive. Especially where untrained in the Islamic sciences, many ordinary but piety-minded Muslims found themselves unable to defend Indonesian Islamic legacies in authoritative terms. "Repertoires of public reasoning" (Bowen 2003) once deemed sufficient to justify localized traditions on Islamic grounds lost credibility in the face of religionizing movements claiming a unitary and absolutist understanding of God's commands (see Chapter 7; Peletz 2020).

The ethical contention surrounding shariah and Islamic ethics did not end, however, with these claims of a finished and absolutist divine law. The latter only served to deepen debate among Indonesian Muslims over just what Islam's ethical and legal traditions are and who has the right to define their meanings. The contention was expressive of an "epistemological crisis" akin to that Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) has analyzed in classical Greece and the modern West. In recent years, these debates over the forms and meanings of shariah and Islamic ethics have assumed a regularized form, settling on several recurring questions. Who has the right to define Islamic ethics and legal traditions (see Anwar 2001; Esposito and Mogahed 2007)? By what methods and authorities are these traditions to be derived and enforced? And last but not least, are Islamic or shariah-based norms *really* akin to modern positive laws and finished in their form? Or, as Ramadan (2009:59–76), Moosa (2001), Kamali (2008b), and Masud (2002, 2005) all argue, building on Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi's (d. 1388) scholarship (see al-Raysuni 2005), or as Muslim

feminists like Kecia Ali (2006) and Ziba Mir-Hosseini (2003, 2009) have similarly observed, does a proper derivation of Islamic norms require a holistic and contextualized determination of the "spirit of God's law" and the law's "higher aims" (*maqasid al-shariah)*?

As this book has emphasized, Muslim societies are heir to a unique civilizational legacy with regard to questions of ethical knowledge and its prioritizations in societal practice. More than a thousand years ago, Muslim legal and ethical scholars hoping to provide moral guidance for a diverse Muslim civilization created intellectual technologies for determining ethical priorities within a Qur'an- and Sunna-based perspective. As we have seen, the methodology centered on what has subsequently come to be known as the *maqasid al-shariah*, the "higher aims" or "objectives" of the shariah (Chapters 1 and 7).

Originally formulated by, among others, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d.1111) and Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (d. 1388), the discourse of the *maqasid al-shariah* sought to go beyond the formalism and closure favored by some scholars of Islamic legal jurisprudence so as to identify and prioritize God's commands through a holistic rather than a segmentary reading of scriptural sources (Hallaq 2011; S. Jackson 2006; Moosa 2001). The *maqasid* methodology affirmed that Islamic law on most matters is less a matter of fixed and finished rules than it is the safeguarding of five "essential" (Ar., *daruriyyat*) aims: life, religion and morality, rationality and knowledge, property, and family and progeny. However, as Mohammad Hashim Kamali has noted, the celebrated Hanbali legal scholar Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 1328) "observed that anyone who reads the Qur'an will find a variety of other values that also merit recognition, well beyond the scope of the five essentials." Today many Muslim democrats are convinced that the *maqasid* essentials include the values of justice, human dignity, gender equality, and freedom (Kamali 2008b:21; Nassery, Ahmed, and Tatari 2018).

Notwithstanding these civilizational precedents, "for much of their history the *maqasid* remained relatively underdeveloped, due partly to a certain reluctance on the part of Muslim jurists" to presume they could speak on God's aims (Kamali 2008b:8). This process of ethical reflection and prioritization also remained underdeveloped for political and structural reasons: public reasoning over the core principles of Islamic ethics had not yet been "democratized" or opened to discussion by publics beyond the ranks of scholarly elites (Eickelman and Salvatore 2002).

In Indonesia in recent decades, however, *maqasid* priorities and methodologies have become the subject of widespread and contentious debate. Muslim scholars and publics are today involved in ongoing discussions of how to know and abide by God's commands while also responding to the distinctive opportunities and challenges of our late-modern age (Auda 2008; Jackson 2006; Kamali 2008a, 2008b). As both Wael Hallaq (2011) and the Toronto-based legal scholar, Anver Emon (2018), have observed, there has been a regrettable tendency in some academic commentaries on the *maqasid* to focus attention purely on the technical

methodologies required to justify and advance *maqasid* scholarship. However, a key characteristic of the Islamic reformation since the late nineteenth century, and a feature especially prominent here in Indonesia, has been the opening of all manner of ethical, legal, and political contentions to broader publics and less scholastic methodologies for determining just what matters in Islamic ethical tradition. For the past 127 years, Muslim publics here in Indonesia have grappled with *maqasid*-like prioritizations *avant la lettre*. This is to say Muslims in associations like the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have explored the question of just what "really matters" in Islamic ethical practice without necessarily grounding their efforts on explicit references to preexisting *fiqh* scholarship.

This book has aimed to build on Emon, Hallaq, and Kamali's observations, moving in an Indonesian context beyond scholarly circles to the broad range of ethical and political-economic processes through which Muslim Indonesians – "ordinary" (Peletz 1997) as well as scholarly – come to know, debate, and prioritize Islamic ways of knowing Islam and living together in some variety of citizen belonging. This book has not sought to endorse one variety of Islamic ethical reasoning over another. This study has instead sought to demonstrate that, rather than diminishing the struggle for ethical prioritization in the contemporary Muslim world, movements for a more or less invariant "sharia-tization" of state and society have only deepened it. They have done so, moreover, while moving these debates over Islam's ethical priorities out of restricted circles of scholarly elites into broader Muslim and, at times, non-Muslim publics.

In recent years, the latter theme of just *which* Islamic values most matter, and just what they should carry over from other ethical traditions like those of liberal democracy or civic nationalism has figured especially prominently in Muslim debates over women and gender (see, for example, Holmes Katz 2006; Mir-Hosseini 2015, 2022; Wadud 1999). These and other examples remind us that Muslim ethical understandings today are, certainly, deeply informed by actors' continuing engagements with the Qur'an, Sunna of the Prophet, and other traditions of Islamic learning. But they are also contingent and conjunctural because affected by carryovers from actors' life experiences in education, new social media, class structures, and the sciences of the world. All this is to say that Muslim ethical values and practices are constituted and changed through the efforts of actors engaging Islamic traditions at the same time that they explore and pursue other social interests and other modes of knowledge and value (see Basarudin 2016; Lempert 2013; Simon 2014). To understand how and why Muslim understandings and practices of ethics and social belonging have varied over time, then, it is not enough to reference scriptures or textual commentaries alone. One has to situate those understandings in the horizons of a subjectivity and society encumbered with diverse and sometimes contradictory self-identifications, class interests, and ethical commitments (Schielke 2010a; Deeb and Harb 2013).

It is this complex process, one both political-economic and epistemological, to which the quest for a new Muslim public ethics here in Indonesia bears witness.

The Indonesian story does not lend itself to easy summaries or breezy forecasts. Nor, to quote Vedi Hadiz (2016) one last time, is it a chronicle of a steady march into the warm light of liberal modernity. But in its frictions, recalibrations, and brilliant flashes of insight and courage, the history of Muslim Indonesia offers lessons and hope on just how people everywhere might live together in equality and civic decency.

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